

History of Gujarati Literature

MANSUKHLAL JHAVERI



SAHITYA AKADEMI
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HISTORY OF GUJARATI LITERATURE



BY
MANSUKHLAL JHAVERI

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PREFACE

Since, as required by the Sahitya Akademi, this History is primarily intended for readers who have no direct access to Gujarati Literature, I have tried, as best as I could, not to make it a catalogue of names nor to burden it with unnecessary details and elaborate criticism. I have tried also to keep myself within the bounds of well-established facts and avoid making any statement that is based on controversial data or touching anything that would be of exclusive interest only to the advanced scholars of Gujarati Literature. That is why readers will not find here those stories about Premanand's life which are based on the Akhyanas of Vallabh, whose very existence is controversial. Nor will they find here discussion of the dates of our mediaeval poets or of topics like the sudden flaring up of the flame of Bhakti in Narasimha Mehta.

I have treated all authors, simply as Gujarati authors, without attaching any importance whatsoever to their caste, creed, sex or religion.

I have, in mind all through, a reader of high literary and cultural interests, whose mother-tongue is not Gujarati, who may be an Indian or even a foreigner and who would like to have a broad comprehensive idea of the growth and development of Gujarati Literature from its beginning to the present day. I have only traced the main trends of the post-1955 Literature, as it is rather too early to view them, at this stage, in their proper perspective.

I have made ample use of my own articles published earlier on authors, books, forms and trends; and of my *An Outline of the History of Gujarati Literature*, written in Gujarati in collaboration with Dr. Ramanlal C. Shah.

I have also drawn heavily upon the work of other writers like K. M. Jhaveri, K. M. Munshi, Anantrai Raval, Dhirubhai Thaker, Sundaram, Jayant Pathak, Raghuvir Chaudhari, Anirudhdha Brahmabhatt, Ushanas, and Chandrakant Topiwalla, in particular; and for this, my most sincere thanks are due to them.

I am also thankful to Prof. Anantrai Raval, Dr. Chimanlal Trivedi, Shri Mukund Parasharya, Dr. Bhogilal Sandesara, and

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I am grateful to Professor Vishnuprasad Trivedi and Shri Gulabdas Broker, who have gone through this book and offered me some valuable suggestions.

I am grateful, also to the Sahitya Akademi for entrusting me with this work, which I consider a great privilege, and for putting up with my delay in submitting the manuscript.

All translations of Gujarati quotations, unless otherwise acknowledged, are done by me.

August 4, 1976

MANSUKHLAL JHAVERI

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CHAPTER I

GENERAL BACKGROUND

(I)

Gujarat is an ancient land whose boundaries have undergone adjustments from time to time. On May 1, 1960 it became an autonomous State in the Union of India and is now bounded on the North by Marwad, Mevad, Sirohi, the desert of Cutch and the ranges of Abu, Arasur, Taranga and Sabarkantha; on the South, by Thane district; on the West, by the Arabian Sea, the gulf of Khambhat (Cambay) and the gulf of Cutch; and on the East, by the Satpuda hills and the Western Ghats. At few points it is more than a hundred miles away from the sea.

The present-day Gujarat comprises Cutch, Saurashtra and the land generally known as Gujarat proper. Of these, Cutch is a very ancient name; and so is Saurashtra which, for a brief interval was called Kathiawad. There was no single name for Gujarat proper, whose various components were, at different periods of history, called Anarta, Lata, Shoorparaka, Anoopta and Aparanta. During the rule of the Gurjars, probably a Shaka tribe which entered India in the fifth century A.D. and conquered West Rajasthan and most of the present-day North Gujarat by the end of the sixth century, the land came to be known as Gurjaratra, Gujjaratta, or Gurjar desha. The Arab travellers in the 8th century pronounced *Gurjar* as "*Juzr*" or "*Guzra*" from which was derived *Guzrat* and later on "*Gujarat*" in the 10th century.

However, it took about five hundred years for the language of the region to be known as Gujarati. Narasimha Mehta calls his language *Apabhrashta Gira*; Padmanabh calls it *Prakrit*; Bhalan calls it *Apabhramsha* or *Gurjar Bhasha*. The first known references to the language as *Gujarati* are by Premanand (1636-1734), a great mediaeval poet, and by La Crose, a German traveller, in 1731.

Gujarati is the language of 20 million Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians. Its pronunciations vary from district to district; and different castes like Mer, Dubla, Chodhara, Baraiya and Bhil etc., as well as certain professions distinguish

themselves from one another not only by their dialectical characteristics but also by their vocabulary. The language spoken and written by the elite in and round about Ahmedabad is now regarded as standard Gujarati; and deviations from it are considered modes of speech peculiar to a district or a social group.

(II)

Till about the 16th century, both Gujarat and Western Rajasthan had, barring some inevitable dialectical differences, a common language, which Dr. Tessitori calls *Old Western Rajasthani*, Narasimharao Divatia calls *Antima Apabhramsha* and Dr. Umashankar Joshi, in order to underscore the fact that the language was common both to Gujarat and Maru (Marwad), calls *Maru-Gurjar*.

This language is likely to have evolved from *Gaurjari*, one of the 27 varieties of Apabhramsha, noted by the Prakrit Grammarian Markandeya in his *Prakrita-sarvasva*, in 1450. The earliest reference to the language of the people of Gujarat and Lata is found in the *Kuvalayamala*, written in 788 by Udyotanasuri; and another, at a later date in the *Sarasvati-Kanthabharana* of Bhoja, in *circa* 1000. But they hardly throw any light on the actual state of the language of the period.

Like all major languages of Northern and Central India, Gujarati belongs to the Indo-Aryan family of languages. It has descended from Sanskrit, through the intermediate stages of Prakrit and Apabhramsha. Its immediate predecessor is Gaurjara Apabhramsha, which is the predecessor of the Vraj and the Rajasthani languages as well.

The language of some of the Apabhramsha Duhas cited by Hemachandra (1088-1172) in his *Prakṛta Vyākaraṇa*, is Apabhramsha in its last stage or Gujarati in its embryonic stage. Narasimharao Divatia calls it *Antima Apabhramsha* or *Gurjara Apabhramsha*. Hemachandra has dealt with its grammar in details, and illustrated his observations by quoting profusely from the folk as well as written poetry of the day. These quotations can be regarded as the earliest specimens of Old Gujarati.

Many scholars have attempted to trace the growth and development of Gujarati language from the days of Hemachandra to the present day. But the division into three periods, as suggested by Keshavlal Dhruva, is good enough to give the reader a broad idea of the main stages of evolution. According to him, Gujarati language can be divided into three periods:—

1. *Apabhramsha or Old Gujarati*—From the 10th or 11th to the 14th century.
2. *Mediaeval Gujarati*—From the 15th to the 17th Century.
3. *Modern Gujarati*—Period commencing from the 18th century¹.

1. (a) Narasimharao traces the development as follows: -

1. *Apabhramsha*—Upto Vikrama Samvat 950 (Vikrama Samvat started 56 or in some cases 57 years earlier to the Christian Era.)
2. *Middle Apabhramsha*—Upto 13th Century V.S.
3. *Antima or Gurjara Apabhramsha*—(which is Dr. Tessitori's O.W.R.) From 13th Century V.S. to 1550 V.S.
4. *Old Gujarati*: 1550 V.S. to 1650 V.S.
5. *Mediaeval Gujarati*: 1650 V.S. to 1750 V.S.
6. *Modern Gujarati*: 1750 V.S. onwards

(b) Keshavram Shastri traces it as follows:—

1. *Gourjar Apabhramsha or Old Gujarati*.
 - (a) First stage—6th to 11th century A.D.
 - (b) Second stage—upto the first half of the 14th century
2. *Gurjar Bhasha or Mediaeval Gujarati*:
From the latter half of the 14th century to the first half of the 17th century.
3. *Modern Gujarati*:
 - (a) First stage from the latter half of the 17th century to the first quarter of the 19th century
 - (b) Second stage: the current one.

(III)

The dialects of Gujarati are broadly divided into two parts: the dialects of the hilly region and the dialects of the plains.

The dialects of the hilly region are called *Bhili* dialects which differ from area to area and group to group. Sir George Grierson has noted examples from 22 such dialects.

The dialects of the plains are mainly eight in number: *Surati*, *Charotari*, *Patani* (North Gujarati), *Zalawadi*, *Gohilwadi*, *Sorathi*, *Halari*, and *Cutchi*.

Scheduled castes and tribes like Mers, Dublas, Chodharas, Baraiyas, Nayakas, etc., communities like Parsis, Bohras, Khojas, Bhatiyas etc. and professionals like Sonis (Goldsmiths) etc. have their own particular vocabulary. These tribes, communities and professionals are distinguished by this vocabulary from others who speak the same regional dialects.

(IV)

Gujarati script is the same as the Devanagari script, except for some slight variations in the vowels *a* (अ), *aa* (आ), *i* (इ), *ee* (ई), *u* (उ) and *oo* (ऊ) and in the consonants *k* (क), *kh* (ख), *ch* (च), *j* (ज), *jh* (झ), *n* (ण) *d* (ड), *ph* (फ), *l* (ल) and *lh* (ळ). It has also done away with the top line of the Devanagari.

In the course of these many centuries, Gujarati has lost the sounds *lr* (लृ), *ri* (ऋ), and *sh* (ष्), except in the Sanskrit tatsma words.

And, at different periods of its contact with other language groups, Gujarati has assimilated certain sounds like the semi-palatal (अर्धतालव्य) *ch* (च्), *chh* (छ), *j* (ज्) and *jh* (झ); the para-lingual (मूर्धन्यतर) *d* (ड्), and *dh* (ढ्); the three types of nasals, viz. the strong (तीव्र)², the soft (कोमल)³ and the softer (कोमलतर)⁴ ones; and the broad (विवृत) *e* (ऐ) and *o* (ओ)⁵

2. as in पंकज; खंडेर; पंजो; गंध; डुंगर etc.

3. as in पांच; आंगली; खांचो; खांड; आंधण etc.

4. as in कंई; एही; अही; सुवालु etc.

5. as in (a) बेसे; पैसे; वेंर; पेंठो; बेंठो etc.

(b) गॉळ; मॉर; चॉक; कौंडी; कौण etc.

As the existing Devanagari characters cannot represent these in an unmistakable way, attempts have been made to do so by distinguishing the characters by certain diacritical marks.

(V)

On account of its vital and historically continuous relations with Sanskrit, the proportion of Sanskrit words and words derived from Sanskrit in the vocabulary of Gujarati is very large. There is also a fair proportion of *Deshya* (indigenous) words, that is, words which perhaps belonged to the language of the natives of the region before the advent of the Gurjars or to the language of the Gurjars. These words have nothing in common with the other languages of India.

Moreover, because of the long coast-line of about 1000 miles of Gujarat and its commercial, cultural and political association with others, Gujarati has assimilated words from sister languages like Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Urdu, Sindhi and languages of the Dravidian stock on the one hand and foreign languages like Persian, Arabic, Portuguese, Dutch, French and English etc. on the other. Since Gujarati was born and bred during the period of the Muslim rule, Persian and Arabic words have, from the very beginning, formed a part of its vocabulary.

And English has touched the very vitals of the language, and changed its race. Apart from the many idioms and proverbs, punctuation marks and certain peculiarities of syntax, English has given to Gujarati the indirect construction of sentences.

(VI)

Three inscriptions at the foot of the Girnar, near Junagadh, provide valuable information about the good deeds done by three great Royal Dynasties of India. The one bears the 14 edicts of the great Mourya emperor Ashoka; the second is by the Kshatrapa King Rudradaman; and the third, by the Gupta emperor Skanda Gupta.

The Gupta Dynasty lasted in Gujarat for just 70 years. But their successors, Maitrakas, too, shared a part of their glory. About 30 temples of the Maitraka period have been discovered in Saurashtra. They provide valuable material for a historical survey of Indian Architecture. The worship of the Sun God spread during the Maitraka period. There are many temples dedicated to the Sun God. Rannade—Randel—, consort of the Sun God, is still worshipped in parts of Gujarat.

After the Maitrakas came the Chapotakas, the Rashtrakootas and the Pratiharas. They made Gujarat their home and merged

their identity with that of the land. The Chalukyas—Solankis, as they are generally known, raised Gujarat to the pinnacle of glory by an unprecedented expansion of trade, commerce, navigation and political power. Jainism and Ahimsa (non-violence) struck their roots in Gujarat during this period.

The Vaghelas, who followed the Solankis, contributed to the architecture of Gujarat. The marble temples at Delvada, Abu, those superb things of beauty, belong to this period.

Like all these, the Muslims and the Parsis, too, came from outside and made Gujarat their home.

Perhaps because of the impact and intermixture of the many tribes that came and settled in Gujarat, the people of Gujarat are, by their very nature, accommodative and tolerant. The Sun, Vishnu, Shiva, Mahavira, and Pir (Muslim Saints): all these and many other gods and goddesses are worshipped in Gujarat. Gujarat is one of the strongholds of the Pushti Sampradaya (Sect) of Vallabhacharya of Andhra Pradesh; and the Svaminarayana sect of Sahajanand Swami of Ayodhya (U.P.) has its headquarters in Gujarat. Hiuen-Tsang refers to the Valabhi Vidyapith (University) of the Maitrakas, a centre of the Vedic, Jain and Buddhist religions and learning.

There is, of course, no Gujarati architecture or sculpture as such. But Gujarat has specimens of architecture commencing from the 5th century A.D. to the 13th century. The Sooryamandir (Sun-temple) of Modhera, the Rudramala of Siddhapur, and the Navalakhi mandirs of Ghumli and Sejakpur are some of the noteworthy specimens of architecture in Gujarat.

The Muslim Sultans of Gujarat extended their patronage to the artists. The 13th century and the period thereafter, therefore, witnesses innovations in sculpture. Beautiful trees, creepers, flowers, and geometrical designs, instead of men and animals, find their place in the mosques and other Islamic architecture. A window carved in sandstone in the Siddi Saiyed Masjid of Ahmedabad is known throughout the world as a masterpiece of sculptural art. Many of these carvings and decorations are considered to be superior to those of the Mogul period at Delhi and Agra.

Gujarat has preserved the best traditions of Indian Painting. Specimens of peculiar Gujarati painting along with the Mogul and the Rajput styles of paintings have been preserved in Jain manuscripts from the 11th century A.D., and in the murals of Sihore, Pandarshinga and Jamnagar.

In spite of the fact that there is no Gujarati music, as such, it is of no small significance that some of the Ragas noted in the

Sangeetaratnakara, a compendium of Indian music, are Gurjari, Velavali (Bilaval), Travan, Souviri, Khambhavati, Ahiri, Lati, Sorathi, which are associated with the names of places in Gujarat. The Vichitra-Veena, a musical instrument which is played even to-day, was invented by Jesangbhai, a musician of Ahmedabad. There are whole castes like Nayak, Bhojak, Targala, Gandharva, Mir, Langha etc. who live on the cultivation and performance of music and drama.

The Rasa, Garbi and folk-dances also are an ancient heritage of Gujarat. The Rasa, of course, is no exclusive peculiarity of Gujarati culture. It is seen, with appropriate variations and modifications, in other parts of India as well. But the *Garbo*, a dance by women, with an earthen pot with holes all around and with a lamp inside, on their heads, is peculiar to Gujarat alone.

CHAPTER II

OLD LITERATURE

(I)

During the period, 746-1298, of Rajput rule over Gujarat, numerous works in Sanskrit were composed by Brahmin and non-Brahmin poets. But as Apabhramsha started to come into its own, by about the 10th century, court poets started writing Rasas¹ in the language spoken by the people—a mixture of Marwadi, Vraj and other vernaculars—eulogizing their royal patrons; and Jain sadhus (monks) wrote Rasas and Phagus² in praise of the wealthy faithful and for imparting religious and moral instruction to their followers. Over 300 of such Rasas written during the Post-Hemachandra and the Pre-Narasimha period have been listed by Jain scholars. Not many of them conform to the minimum standard of literary excellence; but they provide valuable links in the study of the evolution of the language.

This period is dominated very largely by Jain sadhus, monks, who had renounced the world for the purpose of self-realization. It was their mission to impart instruction in religion and morals to their followers; and they utilized the traditional forms of poetic literature towards the achievement of this purpose.

The lay poets had not had to subject themselves to these restrictions. They, therefore, sang as best as they could, of *prema* (love) and *shaurya* (heroism), the two elemental passions of the human heart.

The list of works produced during this period is quite impressive. But not many of these have sufficient literary value.

The period between 1297 and 1420, when Muslims ruled over Gujarat, was one of political unrest and social instability. During this period, the Jain Bhandars (repositories) of Patan, Jesalmir, and Khambhat served as the custodians of manuscripts written in Gujarati.

1. Please see Appendix A.

2. Please see Appendix B.

Muni Jin Vijayji, an eminent Indologist and Research Scholar says that, "In comparison with the numerous Gujarati manuscripts found in the old Bhandars, the number of old Marathi or Bengali works will be found to be quite negligible. If a complete inventory of Gujarati Literature from Post-Hemachandra to Pre-Premchand period is prepared, it will run into a huge volume. Many of our sister languages have little of the good literary works written during the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries that Gujarati has. The works are both in verse and in prose. That Old Gujarati has no prose, is a myth. I commend to my readers my *Prachin Gujarati Gadyasandarbha* (Extracts from old Gujarati Prose) published by Gujarat Vidyapith. I have included in that book a few stories from a work written in Samvat 1411 (1355 A.D.) by Tarunaprabha. They are just a few samples. Literature of stories like these is so vast that if it were printed, it would easily run into 20 or 25 volumes of the size of the *Kavya-dohana* of the Gujarati (Printing) Press.

Thus from the point of view of language and literature, the literary wealth of Gujarati is excellent. Gujarat is the only place which can provide the most valuable material for the study of the stages of development of the regional languages of Aryavarta from the times of Mourya Ashoka to the Mogul Akbar."⁴

Hemachandra (1088-1172)

Hemachandra, a Jain monk, was a genius, whose scholarship and erudition have never been equalled since. He flourished during the regimes of Siddharaja and Kumarapala, two illustrious Solanki kings, who, under his wise and able guidance, raised cultural Gujarat to the pinnacle of glory.

Hemachandra was not a creative writer himself; but, by his sharp intellect, he did much in the fields of grammar, philology and poetics. He compiled *Anekartha-Samgraha*, *Abhidhana Chintamani*, and *Deshi Nama Mala*, all lexicons; and *Chhandonushasana* and *Kavyanushasana*, works on poetics. But his interests were not limited to literature in the narrow sense of the word. He wrote *Nighantushesha*, a work on pharmacology; *Yogashastra*, a work on yoga; and *Trishashtishalakapurusha*, an anthology of legends of Jain Tirthamkaras (the greatest religious personages).

3. A volume of about 800 pages.
4. This is an English translation by me of an extract from "A glance at the activities in the field of Historical research in Gujarat, a lecture delivered in Gujarati by the Muni as Sectional President of the 12th Gujarati Sahitya Parishad.

His *magnum opus*, however, is *Siddha Hema Shabdanushasana* a grammar of Sanskrit, Prakrit and Apabhramsha. By codifying for the first time the rules of Apabhramsha grammar, Hemachandra did precisely that for Apabhramsha, which Panini did for Sanskrit. This grammar he is said to have written at the request of Siddharaja. It is said that Siddharaja felt so happy and gratified at the completion of the work, that, as a mark of supreme respect, the book was placed on the king's own adorned elephant, taken in a procession and brought to the Court, where the King himself offered worship to it as a symbol of Sarasvati, the Goddess of Learning.

Many of the Duhas (couplets) selected by Hemachandra, to illustrate the rules he codified, are specimens of fine poetry.

Let those who return with their love unfaded be millions of miles away. Even if he returns after a hundred years he alone, O friend, is the abode of my happiness.⁵

My limbs did not meet his limbs: nor lip did reach his lip. Our sport came to an end, O friend, the moment I saw the lotus-like face of my love.⁶

Sterling qualities do not bring wealth: but they bring you fame. People enjoy the fruits Fate ordained for them. The lion does not fetch a penny, while elephants are bought at lakhs.⁷

Thank god, that my lord has died, O friend! I would have felt ashamed before my friends, had he run away from the battlefield and returned home.⁸

Only cowards would say: We are few, and the enemies are many. Look at the sky, you simple one! How many stars produce the moonlight?⁹

5. અગલિઅ-નેહણિવટાહૈં જોઅળ-લક્ષુ વિ જાડ ।
વરિસ-સણ વિ જો મિલઈ સહિ સોક્ષહં સો ઠાડ ॥
6. અંગહિં અંગુ ણ મિલિડ હલિ અહરે અહરુ ણ પત્તુ ।
પિઅ જોઅંતિહે મુહકમલુ એવંડ સુરડ સમત્તુ ॥
7. ગુણિહિં ણ સંપડ કિત્તિ પર ફલ લિહિઆ મુંજંતિ ।
કેસરિ ણ લહઈ બોઢિઅ વિ ગય લક્ષેહિં ઘેપંતિ ॥
8. મલ્લા હુઆ જુ મારિઆં બહિણિ મહારા કંતુ ।
લજ્જેજં તુ વયંસિઅહુ જઈ મગ્ગા ઘરુ એતુ ॥
9. અમ્હે થોવા રિડ બહુઅ કાયર એવં મળન્તિ ।
મુદ્ધિ ણિહાલહિ ગયળઅલુ કઈ જળ જોળહ કરન્તિ ॥

Do not tell a lie, my friend. My husband has two limitations: while he was giving away generously, I alone was left out; while he was fighting, his sword alone was left out.¹⁰

This length of my sturdy breasts is a handicap, my friend, and not an advantage. My lord finds it difficult to reach my lower lip with ease.¹¹

How can one sleep when the lover is there? and how can she when he is not? I have lost it both ways: I cannot sleep this way or that.¹²

Hemachandra has written *Dvyashraya Kavya* in two parts. The first one is *Dvyashraya Mahakavya* written in Sanskrit. It narrates in 20 cantos the history of the Chalukya Dynasty from Mularaja to the *Digvijaya*—the conquest of various countries in all directions—of Siddharaja Jayasimha. Simultaneously, it illustrates the *Sutras* of the Sanskrit grammar he detailed in the first seven *adhyayas* (chapters) of his *Siddha Hema Shabdanushasana*.

The other part of the *Dvyashraya Kavya* in eight cantos is written in Prakrit. It is also called *Kumarapala Charita*, as it is a biography of Kumarapala. It simultaneously illustrates the *Sutras* of *Prakrit*, *Shouraseni*, *Magadhi*, *Paishachi*, *Chulika Paishachi* and *Apabhramsha*, the languages he dealt with in his *Prakrita Vyakarana*, which is the eighth *adhyaya* of *Siddha Hema Shabdanushasana*.

Thus, the Sanskrit *Dvyashraya* illustrates the rules of the Sanskrit grammar; and the Prakrit one, the rules of the Prakrit grammar. They also give a history of the Chalukya (Solanki) Dynasty from Mularaja to Kumarapala.

"*Dvyashraya*" means "having two meanings." This title is apt, inasmuch as, on the one side the works narrate the history of the Solanki Dynasty, and on the other, they illustrate the rules of grammar framed by the author.

Bharateshvara Bahubali Rasa (1185) by Shalibhadra Suri is the oldest *Rasa* yet available, of the period. It portrays the

10. महु कन्तहो बे दोसडा हेल्लि म झड्डहि आलु ।
देन्तहो हउं पर उन्वरिअ जुज्झन्तहो करवालु ॥
11. भइतुङ्गत्तणु जं यणहं सो छेअउ ण हु लाहु ।
सहि जइ केवँइ तुडि-वसिण भहरि पहुच्चइ णाहु ॥
12. पियसंगमि कउ णिड्डी पिअहो परोक्खहो केवँ ।
मइँ बिण्णि वि विण्णासिआ णिड् ण एवं ण तेवँ ॥

struggle for power between Bharata and Bahubali, two sons of Rishabhadeva, the first Tirthamkara of the Jains. Rishabhadeva had 100 sons. In order that the family be spared the agonies of internecine warfare, it was decided that Bharata, the oldest son, should ascend the throne and the others should enter orders. All except Bahubali agree to this; and they renounce the world. Bahubali, proud of his physical and intellectual powers, challenges the decision. Bharata, no doubt, was the eldest; but he (Bahubali) was the best, he claimed; and demanded that he be made the king. After appropriate tests, Bahubali's claim is upheld. Bharata, in a fit of jealousy and sheer desperation, deals a deadly blow to Bahubali. The latter, burning with anger, raises his giant fist. Their hearts missing a beat, the onlookers expect it to descend like a thunderbolt on Bharata. But, lo and behold! The fist descends on Bahubali's own head; and Bahubali vigorously uproots his own hair.¹³ He renounces the world; and Bharata continues as a king.

Bahubali finds it hard to bow his head, as required by the rules of the order to his 98 brothers, who were senior to him in order, but junior to him in age. He, therefore, decides to acquire *Kevala Jnana*, supreme absolute knowledge, on the strength of his own *Tapasya*, (self mortification). He applies all his strength, vigour and indomitable will to this task. Practising greater and greater self mortification, he strives hard to achieve his objective; but to no avail. His two sisters, who also had entered orders, happen to go there. They see the tremendous emotional tension Bahubali was passing through; and tell him: "Get you down from the elephant, brother dear!"¹⁴ Bahubali at once sees the point. He overcomes his infirmity, his ego, the elephant he was riding on; and decides to go to his brothers to offer them his respects and reverence. The moment he arrives at this decision, he obtains *Kevala Jnana*.

Neminatha Chatuspadika (1244) by Vinayachandra (c. middle of the 13th century) is the earliest Barmasi.¹⁵ Neminatha, the hero of the poem, a noble and compassionate soul, is proceeding to marry Rajul, daughter of Ugrasena of Dwarka. The marriage procession arrives at the bride's residence. On the way, Neminatha happens to notice a number of animals gathered together in a yard. On inquiry, he learns that they are there to be slaughtered and served as delicacies at the marriage feast. His heart melts in compassion. He at once leaves the marriage hall and goes away. The youthful Rajul, fondly hoping for the return

13. This is called Keshalunchana, a must for one who enters orders.

14. वीरा मोरा गजथी हेठा उतरो.

15. Please see Appendix C.

of Neminatha, waits and waits and waits for him; and the months roll by one after the other. The moods of nature vary with the varying seasons: not so the moods of Rajul. Her sadness and suspense intensify with the passage of time. The *Adhika Masa*¹⁶ sets in. Neminatha returns, not as a bridegroom, but as a sadhu, who has lost his interest in things mundane. He persuades Rajul also to renounce the world. And Rajul agrees.

The major part of the poem is in the form of conversation between Rajul and her female friend. The friend persuades Rajul to forget Neminatha:

"What has been lost if Nemi has gone away? There are hundreds of other inimitable grooms."¹⁷

Rajul replies, "All the stars shine brightly as long as the Sun does not rise in the sky."¹⁸

In the month of Ashvina, touched at the sufferings of Rajul, the friend says:

"Do not, friend, hanker after Nemi, who betrayed you from the very beginning and ignored the love of eight previous births."¹⁹

Rajul has only one reply to give:

"Kind Nemi is not to blame, my friend. Direct your anger towards Ugrasena, who got the yard filled with animals, and separated me from my dear."²⁰

Rajul's attachment to Neminatha is, thus, ably portrayed in this poem.

The poem ends on a happy note. The poet says:

"The *Adhika Masa* moves in all the months; adapts itself to the qualities of all the six seasons.²¹ In order to meet her beloved, Rajul raises her hands upwards. The daughter of Ugrasena has sent a message to her beloved. With her heart full of regard for the beloved, Rajul went to the mountain Girnar

16. According to the Hindu Calendar, there is an additional month, every third year. It is called *Adhika Masa*—the additional month.

17. गयउ नेमि तउ विणठइ काइ, अछई अनेरा वरह सयाई ।

18. धरइ तेजु गहगण सवि ताव, गयणि न उगई दिणयरु जाव ॥

19. सखि नवि खीना नेमीहिरेसि, मन आपणपउं तउं खय नेसि ।

जिणि दिक्खाडिउं पहिलउं छेहु, न गणिउ अद्भवंतर नेहु ॥

20. नेमि दयालू सखि निरदोसु, कीजइ उग्रसिणउपरि रोषु ।

पसुय भराविउ मूकउ वाडु, मुझु प्रियसरिसउ कियउ बिहाडु ॥

21. There are six seasons, of two months each, in a year: *Shishira*, *Vasanta*, *Grishma*, *Varsha*, *Sharad*, *Hemanta*.

with five of her female friends. There, with her friends, Rajul, the aggregate of virtues, gets initiated by the Lord Neminatha, enters orders and attains pure *Kevala Jnana*, having all the Siddhis²² under her absolute control”²³

Siri Thulibhadda Phagu (circa 1334)—by Jinapadma Suri is the first Phagu in Gujarati.

The hero of the poem is Thulibhadda (Sthoolibhadra), a youthful and handsome Jain sadhu. In order to test his mettle, his Guru orders him to pass the chaturmasa, the four months of the monsoon,²⁴ at the residence of Kosha, a young and beautiful veshya (courtesan), to whom he was passionately attached and with whom he had stayed for 12 years before he renounced the world and entered orders. Intoxicating youth, irresistible charm, and agreeable season: all conspire to tempt the young sadhu. But, in vain. The sadhu stands adamant and unconcerned. And his piety, serenity and self control work their way into the disturbed heart of Kosha and pacify her. The gods in Heaven, pleased at the strength of character of the young sadhu, shower flowers over him.

The Phagu, as a rule, deals with the sensuous pleasures of spring time. But the poet, here, has selected monsoon in order to enable his hero to settle down at a place continuously for four months. And the beauty of nature in the monsoon in Gujarat is in no way inferior to that in the spring.

The best, however, among the Phagus so far discovered, is *Vasanta Vilasa*, by an unknown author, who at any rate, is not a Jain. The date of composition of the poem is also not known. Some scholars put it in the first quarter of the fifteenth century: some put it at the middle of the fourteenth century: some even earlier. The poem comprises only 84 couplets. But few, if any, poems of its *genre* can surpass it in literary excellence. It is a song of zest for life. The female friend of a lady, whose pride works as her worst enemy, says to her:

22. Superhuman faculties: they are eight in number.

23. अधिक मासु सवि मासहि फिरइ, छह रितुकेरा गुण अणुहरइ;
मिलिवा प्रिय ऊबाहुलि हुय, सउ मुकलाविउ उग्रसेणधूय;
पंच सखी सइ जसु परिवारि, प्रिय ऊरमाहि गइ गिरनारि.
सखी सहित राजल गुणरासि, लेइ दिक्खु परमेसर पासि;
निम्मल केवल नाणु लहेवि, सिद्धि सामिणि राजलदेवि ॥

24. The sadhus have to keep on moving from one place to another throughout the year, except for the four months of the monsoon, when they settle down at one place.

"The breasts are not going to remain stiff for ever; do not behave like a fool, you idiot! why are you cross? Youth lasts just for a day or two."²⁵

And a young lady, unable to bear the pangs of separation and stand the sight of a bee or the moon, blurts out in desperation:

"Get thee gone, you bee! do please leave us alone. Our body is reduced to a fraction, and why do you torture my frame, O moon? We, certainly, have no old scores to settle."²⁶

The arrival of the spring, its beauty and majesty, the maddening touch of youth, its zest and thirst, group funs and frolics in the gardens on the outskirts of the town, lovers' quarrels and truce, pains of separation and pleasures of re-union: all these have been depicted here with the sure touch of a master.

*Tribhuvana—Dipaka—Prabandha*²⁷ (circa 1406) by Jayashekhar Suri is a translation of *Prabodha Chintamani*, a Sanskrit poem by the same author, a poet and a great scholar of Sanskrit, Prakrit and Gujarati.

Tribhuvana—Dipaka—Prabandha is an allegory, depicting the plight to which the human soul deluded by illusion is reduced.

There was a king named Parama Hamsa (Soul) who was deep in love with his queen Chetana (Consciousness). One day the King happened to see Maya (Illusion), a young woman and succumbed to her charms. Chetana, sad at the infatuation of the King for Maya, leaves him and disappears.

The king renouncing his kingdom of Vishva (the Universe), founded Kaya-Nagari (the Body; physical senses); and leaving the administration of the state to his minister Mana (Mind), revelled in self indulgence in the company of Maya, who, in her turn, joining in league with Mana, got Parama Hamsa arrested, leaving Mana all powerful and monarch of all he surveyed.

Mana had two wives: Pravritti (Active worldly life) and Nivritti (Inactivity). He made Moha (Delusion), the son of his favourite queen Pravritti, the king and sent into exile Nivritti, the queen who had fallen from favour, and her son Viveka (Discrimination or true knowledge).

25. बैभण थिर न पयोहर मोह रचउ म गमारि ।

मान रचउ किस्या कारण ताइण दीह बिच्यारि ॥

26. भमरला छांडि न पाषल षांषल थ्यां अम्ह सइर ।

चांदुला सइरसंतापण आपण तां नहि वइर ॥

27. Please see Appendix D.

Viveka married two wives Sumati (Good disposition) and Samyamashri (self-control), became king of Punya-Ranga-Patan (Holy and virtuous state), fought with and defeated Moha and killed him.

Brokenhearted at the death of her son, Pravritti died a lingering death; and Mana, at the instance of Viveka tried much to console himself. But unable to forget Moha, he entered a funeral pile called *Shukla Dhyana* (Meditation).

Chetana, finding that her time had come, came out of her hiding, went to her husband Parama Hamsa and asked him to return to his own, now that Maya no longer held her sway, Mana had entered fire, and Moha was destroyed on the battlefield.

Parama Hamsa finds freedom from the bondages of Kaya Nagari and becomes lord of the universe.

Because of its profound spiritual preaching, this poem has been called *Parama—Hamsa—Prabandha* or *Hamsa—Vichara—Prabandha* in several manuscripts.

Keshavlal Dhruva, the editor of this poem, says: "With this one and only Gurjar poem this Jain poet enters the front rank of authors. *Prabodha Chintamani* (i.e. The Gujarati work under reference) is destined to be more famous than *Prabodha-Prakasha*. The genius of the poet scores equal success in the construction of plot, arrangement of characters, and symmetrical development of the allegory. The variety of topics contribute to the amalgamation of many *Rasas*; and the speed of the action and the dexterity of arrangement of incidents in the plot keep up till the very end the suspense of the reader. If Jain Literature had been as widely spread as the literature of non-Jain authors, Jayashekar Suri too would have won as much popularity among the masses as Bhalan and Premanand have done."²⁸

28. આ એક જ ગુર્જર કાવ્યથી જૈન કવિ પ્રથમ પંક્તિનો સાહિત્યકાર બને છે. પ્રબોધચિંતામણિ પ્રબોધપ્રકાશના કરતાં અધિક યશસ્વી થવા નિર્મિત છે. કવિની પ્રતિભા વસ્તુની ગૂંથણીમાં, પાત્રની યોજનામાં અને રૂપકની खीलवणीમાં એકસરખી વિજયશાલી નીવડે છે. પ્રસ્તાવોનું વૈચિત્ર્ય અનેક રસની મિલાવટને પોસે છે; અને કાર્યનો વેગ તથા સંવિધાનનું ચાતુર્ય વાંચનારનું કૌતુક છેવટ સુધી ટકાવી રાખે છે..... જૈનેશ્વર સાહિત્યની પેઠે જૈન સાહિત્ય ચકલે ચૌટે ગવાયું હોત, તો જયશેખરસૂરિ પણ ભાલજ અને પ્રેમાનંદના જેવી પ્રસિદ્ધિ લોકમાં મેલવી હોત.

પંદરમા શતકનાં પ્રાચીન ગુર્જર કાવ્ય, આવૃત્તિ ૧ લી, પ્રસ્તાવના પૃ. ૩૨-૩૩

The period is thus dominated by Jain sadhu poets, whose mission it was to propagate their faith. But Asait Thakur, Shridhar Vyas, Bhima and Abdur Raheman are four of the noteworthy poets who were laymen and who wrote on secular subjects.

Of these, *Hamsauli* (1361) by Asait Thakur, considered to be the father of the Gujarati folk-drama, *Bhavai*,²⁹ is probably based on folk-lore. It is a story in four parts. The first part deals with the marriage of Hamsauli and Naravahana, and the other three deal with the story of the three births³⁰ of their twin sons Hamsaraj and Vacharaj, who are brought up in different places. Being separated from each other, they desperately yearn for seeing each other. Being subjected to many tribulations, and vicissitudes of fortune, they finally meet in Kantinagari, a town whose kingship had, by a stroke of sheer good luck, passed on to Hamsaraj. The brothers then go to Paithan, meet their parents and the other members of the family, and live happily everafter.

Ranamalla Chhanda (c. 1399) by Shridhar Vyas describes the battle which Ranamalla, the Rana (Hindu Rajput ruler) of Idar, fought with the Sultan (muslim ruler) of Patan, Ranamalla won. The pictures of the advancing Rajputs, roaring like lions, of the retreating enemies, tumbling and short of breath; and of the Rana, who with his powerful assault made the enemies run helter-skelter and who dominated the entire scene, are powerfully drawn. It is a short poem of 70 stanzas, of which the first 11 are written in Sanskrit, mixed with Persian and Arabic words.

Sadaya Vatsa Charita (1410) by Bhima is a poem based on a folk-tale which was, for centuries, extremely popular in Gujarat and many other parts of India. It deals with the passionate love, whose course was never smooth, between Sadevanta, the hero, and Savalinga, the heroine, for eight consecutive previous births.

Sandeshaka Rasa (1420)—by Mir Abdur Raheman, the only Muslim poet of the period, is a *Doota-Kavya*, in which the heroine, a young lady at Vijayanagar, conveys through the good offices of a traveller, a message to her beloved husband residing at Khambhat.

“How can I with this ruthless heart which did not reduce me to ashes by the fire of separation, send him a message?”³¹

29. Please see Appendix E.

30. Immortality of soul and its transmigration are articles of faith with a Hindu.

31. जसु णिग्गामि रेणुक्करडि कइअ विरहदवेण ।
किम दिज्जई संदेसडल्ले तसु णिद्रुइ मणेण ॥

CHAPTER III

MEDIAEVAL LITERATURE 15TH CENTURY

(I)

The defeat of Karan Vaghela in 1297 at the hands of Ulaghkhan, younger brother of Ala-ud-din Khilji, opened a new chapter in the history of Gujarat.

Gujarat was ruled by the Nazims (Governors) appointed by the Sultans of Delhi.

This went on till 1398, when Taimur Lang invaded Delhi, looted it, smashed the Delhi Sultanate to pieces and went away. Because of this total breakdown of the central authority, there was disorder and anarchy all over the country. Provincial governors became independent kings, and Zafarkhan, the Nazim of Gujarat, established his independent Sultanate at Patan.

During the regime of Bahadurshah (1525-1536), the seeds of the decline of the Gujarat Sultanate were sown. By 1560, the Sultan of Gujarat became a mere figure-head; and the real power passed into the hands of his Amirs.

Towards the end of the regime of the last Sultan Muzaffar Shah, the Amirs threw to winds even the semblance of civility, grabbed whatever parts of Gujarat they could lay their hands on, became their independent rulers; and then they too ceased to be at peace with one another. It was in this climate of political instability and all round discontent that Akbar, the Mogul Emperor of Delhi, at the invitation of Itimad Khan Gujarati, came to Gujarat in 1572 and annexed it.

By this time, the Portuguese had already arrived. In Gujarat they settled in Div in 1538 and Daman they took in 1559.

The period of the Sultanate of Gujarat between 1412 when the foundation of Ahmedabad was laid, and 1536, the year in which Bahadurshah died, is one of the most glorious chapters in the history of Gujarat. Siddharaja Jayasimha had, no doubt, led Gujarat to its zenith. But the heights scaled by Gujarat during the period of the Sultanate are phenomenal, so far as art, architecture, town-planning, trade and commerce etc. are concerned.

Literature, however, does not seem to have thrived during this period. With the end of the Hindu kings and their Hindu ministers in 1297 and during periods of political instability bordering on anarchy, the patronage extended to poets and scholars came to an end. Sanskrit and Prakrit lost their importance. Gujarat became isolated. Its cultural contact with Marwad, Malva and other regions was lost. Consequently the Old Western Rajasthani or Maru-Gurjar that was commonly used in all these regions started assuming regional forms. And with the passage of time, the language which was spoken only and exclusively in Gujarat came to be known as Gujarati.

In the pre-Muslim days also, folk-literature was, of course, composed in the language of the masses of the region. But literature for the classes was then written in Sanskrit or Prakrit. That literature also came now to be written in the regional language.

Cultural and social frustration coupled with the vital outburst of *Bhakti Dharma*, which took Northern India by storm in the 15th century, led the people of Gujarat and the Hindu poet in particular to the *Prema-Lakshana Bhakti* enunciated by the tenth skandha (canto) of *Shrimad Bhagavata*.

Love is the *siné qua non* of *Prema-Lakshana Bhakti*. The *Jivatma*, the human soul, is a Gopi (a cowherd girl of Gokul) and *Paramatma*, the Godhead, is Krishna (the Cowherd boy of Gokul).

A true *Bhakta* (devotee) therefore, loves Krishna as ardently and passionately as a young lady would love her paramour. Whether he might be eating or drinking, sitting or walking, discharging professional duties or doing household chores, the *Bhakta's* mind is always there with Him. The moment that keeps him away from Him is a moment that is wasted. His life finds its fulfilment in this intense attachment; and he does not want to exchange the supreme pleasure it affords even with *Moksha* (Salvation).

This is specially so in the case of the *Bhakti* of Krishna. Other Gods like Rama or Shiva, or Goddess Shakti are revered and worshipped, propitiated and prayed; but the relation of the *Bhakta* with them is that of a child and a father or a mother.

This *Bhakti Dharma* or *Bhagavata Dharma* is said to have been founded in the 6th century B.C. by Vasudeva of the Vrishni tribe. With the passage of time, it assimilated some of the characteristics of the Vedic Dharma as well as those of the Narayaniya Dharma of the *Mahabharata*. And later on, it absorbed the pranks and plays of Gopala Krishna of the Ahira

(cowherd) tribe. With the introduction of these elements, the original Bhagavata Dharma suffered a sea change. In the mediaeval age, Ramanujacharya, keeping in view the socio-economic conditions of his days, organised it with certain modifications, and with the introduction of Radha in it by Nimbarka-charya, it acquired a new dimension. Ramananda going against the long established tradition of the day, gave his religious discourses in Prakrit (the language spoken and understood by the masses) instead of Sanskrit (the language in which the scriptures were written, but which had ceased to be a means of communication among the masses). He, disagreeing with the view that only those who have a certain *Adhikara* (eligibility) have the right to perform religious practices, opened the doors of religion to every human being, irrespective of his caste or creed, sex, age, education, or station in life; and, thus, made the Bhakti Dharma accessible to everyone.

This *Bhakti*—not necessarily the *Prema-Lakshana Bhakti*, but a deep personal faith in a personal God, along with *Jnana* (philosophical knowledge) and *Vairagya* (loss of interest in things mundane) form the keynote to Gujarati literature of the mediaeval period.

(II)

Bhalan (1405-1489)

Bhalan is a distinguished poet and translator.

Hindu religious books, epics and Puranas (mythological works) were all written in Sanskrit; and in the circumstances obtaining in those days, they were not accessible to the layman. In order to reach them to the masses, they had to be translated into Gujarati.

Translation, in the mediaeval period, was not conceived as an art of faithfully reproducing, word by word, a work from one language to another. The mediaeval translator used to borrow from the original story or incident or thought only as much as, in his judgement, would suit the taste of his audience and with necessary additions, omissions and alterations, he would reconstruct the work.

A poet like Premanand would say: “On this side, the Vyas reads Sanskrit; on this side, is my Prakrit. Not an incident would be dropped. Straight and direct would I go.”¹

And if one were to compare his translation with the original work, one would feel so amazed by the deviations, commissions

1. આ પાસા વ્યાસ વાંચે સંસ્કૃત, આ પાસા માહારં પ્રાકૃત,
કથાપ્રસંગ એક નવ પદે, ચાલ્યો જાઉં સૂધે શેરદે.

and omissions that one would call it an independent work rather than a translation.

The mediaeval translator had his audience before him, an audience of simple, hardworking men and women, who did not know Sanskrit and wanted to be entertained and enlightened as best as they could. Their standards were neither academic nor unusually exacting; and the translator was conditioned not a little by their capacity and taste.

Bhalan's greatest achievement is his translation of the *Kadambari*, the Sanskrit Classic by Bana. The Sanskrit work is in prose. Bhalan is the first Indian writer to render it in an Indian language, Gujarati, and that too in verse, in the form of an akhyana.² As Bhalan himself puts it, *Kadambari*, because of its difficult Sanskrit prose, is accessible only to those who are scholars of the highest order. The ordinary layman would, of course, love to read it; but would find it beyond his ability. It is essentially for him that Bhalan has rendered the *Kadambari* into Bhasha (as Gujarati was called in his time).

This is of course a free and abridged rendering meant for an ordinary reader, who has no pretensions to high scholarship or literary acumen. Bhalan has left out much from the original, added much of his own by way of thoughts and imagery; and, thus, he has recreated as best as was possible at that stage of the language and of the intellectual and cultural level of his audience, the great classic into Gujarati.

Bhalan's descriptions of Vindhya (the Vindhya forest) and the Pampa and the Achchhoda Lakes bear the touch of a master. His delineation of human sentiments is, at places, superb, as when the little parrot Vaishampayana narrates the tale of his woe when hunters attacked their nests and killed, among innumerable others, his old parents. The parrot says:

"Where is the point in elaborating, O king? There is nothing so dear as life. Otherwise, how can I clean forget that my father had died just a moment ago, and surmount the terrible anguish? There is none so heartless as I. I forgot all gratitude I got over all sorrow at the death of my father and mother; and managed to save my skin! Who could ever be so wicked as I?"³

2. Please see Appendix F.

3. राय ! घणूं सूं कहीए कथी ? प्राण समं काई बाहालूं नथी.
नहितरि ततक्षण मूओ तात, ते सवि बीशारि मि बात.
तेह वेदना दाखण सही, मुझ समु को निष्ठुर नहि.
.... मुझ बीशारिओ उपकार.
जननी जनक गयां परलोक, ते मि बीशारिओ सवि शोक;
देह राखवा कर्यु उपाय ; कोए दुष्ट मुझ शरखु, राय ?

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Bhalan is a distinguished poet as well. As a poet of *Vatsalya* (parental love) he is equalled by few and surpassed by none of the mediaeval Gujarati poets. In his padas⁴ of the pranks of the infant Rama and Krishna, Bhalan has depicted, with rare grace, the many moods of a naughty child and his doting parents. In one of such poems, Kaushalya, the mother of Rama, is impatiently looking for her darling. The young child is out of sight.

“Please, ladies,” says the mother, “find me out my Rama, the apple of my eyes. I have searched for him among all the tiny tots of the town. He is not there In order to attend to some urgent work I placed him on the floor but for a while; and God! my jewel slipped away, I know not where! You, servants, get you gone, this very moment! Do not wait even for a sip of water! Go and comb the earth and find him out.” The king also gets impatient, and says: “Go; and search in the waters of the river Sarayu, and Rama, the Lord of Bhalan, has hidden himself by the side of Kaushalya!”⁵

Krishna has left Gokul and gone to Mathura for good. His foster mother Jashoda is pining for his return:

“Come home, my sweet sweet Mavaji! True, you have grown very rich in Mathura; and powerful too. But don't you forget that no one there will love you so much as I do If you do not consider me your mother, then consider me your wet nurse Having loved once, as you did me, no one would ever forget it so lightly. Raghunatha, Lord of Bhalan,

4. Please see Appendix G.

5. बाई, कोई बनावो मने राम लाला. हुँ तो सोधी बळी सघळा बाळा
में तो केहेयो उतार्यो कशुँ काम पढ्युं, मारी नजर चूकी ने रुडुं रतन रड्युं.
ओहो ऊठो अनुचर, पाणी पीनो पछी.



जुओ ऊठो अनुचर, जुओ चारे देश.



राजा राताताता थाय, करो सरज्युमां शोष,
भालण प्रभु रघुनाथ भराणा कौशल्यानी गोद.

do please remember, though only for a moment, the love you once had for us.”⁶

Bhalan is the father of the *Akhyana*, in Gujarati. One does come across, as in the *Sudama Charitra* of Narasimha, the *akhyana* in embryo; and in the works of his successors Virsimh, Karman, Janardan and Mandan, the form seems to have arrived. But *akhyana*, as it is known, assumes its distinct shape in the *Nalakhyana*, *Mrigi-akhyana* and *Durvasa-akhyana* etc. of Bhalan. Bhalan's translations of the *Kadambari*, the *Dashama-skandha* and the *Durga-Saptashati* (which he calls *Chandi-akhyana*) are also in the form of *akhyana*.

As a translator, a poet and a pioneer of *akhyana* in Gujarati, Bhalan ranks among the eminent writers of the mediaeval period.

Narasimha Mehta (Circa 1414-1480)

In spite of the fact that numerous works of note have been composed in “Gujarati” earlier, it is customary to regard Narasimha Mehta as the Father of Gujarati poetry. This may be due to the fact that many of Narasimha's poems—the *Prabhatiyans* (poems to be sung at the dawn of the day) in particular, have been handed down to us from generation to generation, and Narasimha as a *bhakta* and a poet has all through these centuries been held in very high esteem by every Hindu in Gujarat. The works of pre-Narasimha period have, on the other hand, been discovered comparatively at a later date; and primarily because of their language, their appeal is restricted only to a limited number of students and scholars of old and mediaeval Gujarati language and literature.

Narasimha himself has written about some important incidents of his life; and his successors like Vishnudas, Vishvanath and Premanand have also written a number of poems

6. મીઠડા માવજી રે, મારે મંદિર આવો.

મથુરા રિદ્ધિ પામ્યા ઘણો, વાઘ્યું છે અતિ તેજ રે,
સહી જાણજો મારા સરખું કો નહિ આપે હેજ રે.

માતા નહિ થાઉં તમારી, ધાવ કહીને જાણો રે.

તેં દીધો તેમ કોય દે નહિ, પ્રીત કરીને છેહ રે,
માલળ પ્રભુ રઘુનાથ ! સંભારો એક ઘડી તો નેહ રે.

on other important events of his life. Narasimha's life and the miracles associated with it, some of the works attributed to Narasimha, the sudden and unprecedented flare up of the flame of Bhakti in his life, and the difference between the language of his poems which have been extremely popular and the language of his poems which are not so popular: have all been subjects of much controversy for a long time in Gujarat.

As in the case of all Indian saints and men of God, Narasimha's life is marked with some miracles, and numerous legends have been woven around it. Without attempting to examine them in this book, for obvious reasons, we can point out some incontrovertible facts:

Narasimha Mehta was born in Talaja, in *circa* 1414. He was a resident of Junagadh. Losing both his parents at a very young age, he had to be reared up at the house of a cousin. From his young age he loved to meet holy men and ascetics visiting Junagadh on their way to Girnar (a holy mountain) and listen to their bhajans (devotional songs) and religious discourses. Because of this and because of his total lack of interest in the affairs of the world, he lost favour with his cousins and other relatives. Disgusted with the treatment meted out to him and hurt by a *mala fide* sarcastic remark made by his cousin's wife, the young Narasimha left the house, repaired to a jungle, came across a Shiva-linga that had been left neglected for a long time, worshipped it devoutly for a few days and went to Dwarka, where he saw the Rasa Lila.⁷

This Rasa Lila leaves an indelible impression on the mind of the young visionary. It stirs his imagination and a poet is born. Narasimha returned to Junagadh, a changed man. He marries.⁸ But the ways of the world have little attraction for him. He receives in the nick of time sudden assistance from somewhere on the occasion of the marriage of his son Shamal; and once again at the ceremony of the *Simanta*⁹ of his daughter Kunvarbai. He led a life thoroughly dedicated to his Lord Krishna. He died in *Circa* 1480.

Works of Narasimha Mehta include *Har-mala*, *Shamalsha-no Vivaha*, *Govind-Gaman*, *Surata-Sangram*, *Sudama-Charitra*, *Rasa-*

7. A dance performed by several pairs of men and women, moving gracefully and rhythmically in a circle in commemoration of the Rasa performed by Shri Krishna and gopis in Gokul, on the bank of the river Jamuna, on the full-moon night of the month Ashvin.
8. Some scholars say, he had married earlier.
9. A socio-religious function held on the seventh month of the first conception of a lady.

Sahasrapadi, and *Padas* of Bala-Lila, Dan-Lila, Vasant, Hindola, and of bhakti, jnana and vairagya. The authorship of several padas attributed to Narasimha is doubtful.

And doubtful also is the authorship of the *Har-mala*, depicting the event when Krishna is said to have accepted the challenge the enemies of Narasimha had thrown him (Narasimha) and given them a proof of Narasimha's unswerving devotion by decking his neck with a garland of flowers while he was confined in a solitary cell. It is likely that the padas dealing with the core of the incident are written by Narasimha; the rest are interpolations.

Govind-Gaman, *Surata-Sangram* and *Sudama-charitra* are the three akhyanas* composed by Narasimha Mehta. They are, of course, not perfect specimens of the form of akhyana. But the way in which Narasimha has treated the plot borrowed from the *Bhagavata* in these compositions, unmistakably gives one a glimpse of an akhyana in its initial stage.

Govind-Gaman describes the event when Akrura takes away Govinda (Krishna) from Gokul to Mathura. The sentiments expressed by the gopis at the very idea of Krishna's leaving them and going away are extremely moving.

Surata-Samgram (the battle of *Surata*, sexual play) describes in the terms of a battle the love-play between Krishna and his cowherd male associates on the one side and Radha and her cowherd female associates on the other.

Sudama-Charitra narrates the incident in which Sudama, a poor Brahmin, goes to seek financial assistance from Krishna, the king of Dwarka and also a school friend of his. Sudama's hesitation and his wife's down-to-earth approach to the problem, which ultimately makes Sudama yield to her are ably portrayed. *Sudama Charitra* is the best of these three poems.

Narasimha has written hundreds of padas in *Rasa-sahasrapadi* and *Shringara-mala* etc. He has also written padas on themes dealing with the birth of Krishna, and his numerous childhood pranks in his *Dan-Lila*¹⁰ and *Rasa-Lila*. Besides these, Narasimha has written padas dealing with jnana, bhakti and vairagya.

There was hardly a house of a Hindu in Gujarat which, for decades, did not resound with the singing of Narasimha's Prabhatiyans at day-break. Padas of Bala-lila, beginning with the lines "Get away from these waters, my child, my lord will wake up"¹¹, "Awake, my Jadava, awake my cowherd Krishna.

10. Collecting something like a tax from the Gopis taking curds etc. to Mathura.

11. જલકમલદલ છાંદે બાળા, સ્વામી મારો જાગશે.

who but you will lead these herds of cows to the grazing grounds"¹² and padas of jnana, bhakti and vairagya, beginning with the lines like, "Do thou behold there, who is He who has been roaming in the sky, chanting incessantly. 'It is I.' 'It is I!'"¹³. "The world disappears the moment I wake up; in sleep do I see visions of vivid pleasures"¹⁴ "A true vaisnava (man of God) is he who melts at other's pain"¹⁵ or innumerable lines like, "The Sachchidananda is at his playful best and swings in a cradle of gold"¹⁶ belong to the immortal treasure of Gujarati poetry.

Narasimha is a true bhakta; and a genuine subjective poet. There is an unmistakable ring of sincerity in whatever he says. He has, at the touch of his magic wand, turned philosophy into poetry and many of his padas of jnana and vairagya bear the stamp of a master. But he excels in his padas of bhakti, which to him, is an end in itself, and which is a "rare and unique thing in this world; certainly not to be had even in the Brahma-Loka, (the Supreme Celestial World)."¹⁷

Kanhad De Prabandha (1456) by Padmanabh is a historical poem. Like *Ranamalla Chhunda*, it also extolls the courage and heroism of a Rajput king against the Muslims.

It is a long poem in four parts. Madhava, the minister of Karan Vaghela, the last Rajput king of Gujarat, in order to seek revenge for a personal grievance against his master, goes to Delhi and invites Ala-Ud-din Khilji to come and conquer Gujarat. Kahanad De, the king of Zolor, refuses safe passage through his territory to Khilji's army led by Ala-Ud-din's lieutenant Alaf Khan.

Alaf Khan proceeds to Gujarat by another route; invades it and inflicts a crushing defeat on it. On his return he turns on to Zolor. But Kahanad De proves to be more than a match for him, and routs his army. After some time, Ala-Ud-din himself invades Zolor, cuts off Zolor's water supply by polluting the water in the lake at the guarding fort of Samiyana with the blood of slaughtered cows;¹⁸ and surrounds Zolor. The

12. जागने जादवा कृष्ण गोवाळिया, तुज विना धेनुमां कोण जाशे ?
13. नीरखने गगनमां कोण घूमी रह्यो, ते ज हुं ते ज हुं शब्द बोले ?
14. जागीने जोळं तो जगत दीसे नहि, ऊंचमां अटपाटा भोग भासे.
15. वैष्णवजन तो तेने रे कहिये जे पीछ पराई जाणे रे.
16. सच्चिदानंद आनंदक्रीडा करे, सोनाना पारणामांहि झूले.
17. भूतळ भक्ति पदारथ मोडुं, ब्रह्मलोकमां नाहीं रे.
18. To Hindus, cow is a mother and an abode of gods.

Rajputs refuse to surrender. Years roll by. But finally, after 12 years, not through the means of any particular act of bravery on his part but through the betrayal of a faithless menial, Ala-Ud-din enters the fort by a secret passage. A terrible battle ensues, in which Kahanad De is killed.

Ala-Ud-din's daughter Piroja is madly in love with Kahanad De's son Viram De, who, of course, does not even want to see her face, much less to reciprocate her love. So strong is his aversion to Muslims that, as the poet narrates, when after his death on the battle-field, Viram De's head is brought on a platter to Piroja, the head turns away, refusing to see her. Broken hearted Piroja jumps into the river Jamuna and drowns herself.

The poet gives graphic descriptions of the rout of the Muslims, the *Johar*¹⁹ and the acts of bravery and heroism of Kahanad De, his brother Mal De, his son Viram De and other Rajputs. With a voice charged with emotion, he denounces Madhava, a Hindu, who for a personal reason, brought ruin and devastation on his country by inviting the enemies of Hinduism; and reproaches Somanatha, the Lord Shiva, who silently suffered his Linga²⁰ being taken away by the Muslims: "Padmanabh puts it to you, O Somaiya!, where did you leave your trident?"²¹

Hari-Lila Shodasha Kala (1485) by Bhima is based on the Sanskrit *Hari-Lila-Viveka* of Bopadeva. It deals at some length with the story of the *Bhagavata*, in 16 cantos; and thus provides a readable summary of the great Indian Classic. Bhima has also written in verse *Prabodha-Prakasha* (1490), an adaptation of *Prabodha-Chandrodaya*, an allegorical drama in Sanskrit by Krishna Mishra.

Sita Haran by Karman Mantri (c.1470) is a brief narration of the *Ramayana* Story, commencing from the departure of Rama with Sita and Lakshmana to the victorious return of Rama to Ayodhya at the end of the exile. The author does not seem to be as interested in achieving any special poetic effects as in impressing upon the mind of his audience the *Gati* (inscrutable ways) of *Karma* (Fate). This work, therefore, does not rise much beyond the level of bare narration except at a few places where Rama laments the abduction of Sita by Ravana; or when

19. Self-immolation by Rajput ladies jumping into a burning pyre, when the Rajputs depart for the final encounter with the enemies with a grim determination to do or die.

20. A stylized phallic symbol of the masculine cosmic principle and of God Siva.

21. पद्मनाभ पूछई सोमैया ! केथउँ कहुं त्रिशूल ?

Mandodari the wife of Ravana, dissuades her husband from defying Rama with a cryptic remark that he, Ravana, with his 20 eyes failed to see what she, a mere woman with only two eyes, could clearly see.²² The battle between Rama and Ravana is also well described.

Consistent with the practice of his times, the author has his eye on his audience. He selects from the original *Ramayana* only those things which would appeal to the imagination and taste of his audience. He also adds things of his own or things borrowed from other sources.

This work is more important as an indication that, during the 15th century, Rama also was as much an object of adoration and reverence as Krishna, than as an admirable work of creative literature.

22. लोचन बेहूइ हूं देखूं, तुझ फूटौ वीस !

CHAPTER IV
16TH CENTURY

(I)

Miranbai (1499-1547)

Miranbai was born in Rajasthan, not in Gujarat. Yet she is considered to be a Gujarati poet. This is probably due to the fact that the language in which she composed her poems, the language which Dr. Tessitori terms Old Western Rajasthani, was common to Rajasthan and Gujarat. And Miranbai being a poet whose popularity matched that of Narasimha, the language of her poems, which were at the tip of the tongue of generations of Hindus for decades on end, went on changing with the phonetic and morphological changes in the language of the region in which it was spoken. Thus, with the passage of time, the language of Miranbai's poems became Gujarati in Gujarat and Rajasthani in Rajasthan. Miranbai also made Dwarka in Gujarat her home during the last 15 years of her life.

As in the case of most Indian saints, many legends have grown around the life of Miranbai. All that has been established so far is that she was born about 1499 in Medta, Rajasthan. Her grandfather Rao Dudaji had, since her very childhood, drawn her towards the bhakti of Shri Krishna, the family deity. When 18 years of age, she was married to Bhojaraj, a grandson of Kumbhaji, the Rana of Chitod. Bhojaraj died a few years after the marriage; and the widow Miranbai turned more and more towards Krishna. Because of her increasing association with ascetics and sadhus, tales started being told about her. Her brother-in-law, Vikramsinh tried as best as he could, to force Miranbai to return to the conventional life of a Rajput House. But the greater the pressure from her relatives, the greater and stronger became Miranbai's attachment to Krishna. When the persecution became intolerable, Miranbai left Chitod, Mevad, returned to Medta, thence to Vrindavan and finally settled down at Dwarka, one of the four *Dhamas*, the holiest of the places¹ for a Hindu. There, engrossed in uninterrupted bhakti of her beloved Krishna, she died in 1547.

Burning with insatiable love for Krishna, Miranbai is not only the first but also the foremost woman poet in Gujarat.

1. The other three are, Badari in the North, Puri in the East and Rameshwara in the South.

Hers, like Narasimha's, is a household name in Gujarat, and she is as popular a poet in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh (Northern India) as she is in Gujarat. Hundreds of padas with the signature "Giridhar Nagar, the Lord of Bai Miran"² in the last line, have been collected. But the authorship of about 250 of them is established. The rest of them are considered to have been written by others who, either through modesty or love of prestige and popularity, attributed them to Miranbai. It must be noted that this—attributing the work to a master—was not an unusual practice in mediaeval India. Hundreds of padas have been attributed to Narasimha Mehta and Kabir.

The padas of Miranbai are replete with a loving passion for Krishna, not the Yogeshwara Krishna of the *Bhagavad Gita*, but the cowherd boy of Gokul, the boy with a flute (Bansi) in hand, and a crown of peacock feathers on the head. To Miranbai, this Krishna is a living entity. He is the only object of her love, the lord of her heart, the master of everything she calls her own. Her love for Him is not of this life alone; it has run through the course of many many previous births; and Miranbai has nourished that creeper by her everflowing tears of love. She sometimes experiences a feeling of He having met her, and then in sheer ecstasy she bursts forth into song and dance. But, by and large, she is a love-lorn lady, whose paleness people mistake for some physical ailment, and who has grown so emaciated that the ring of her finger serves well as a bangle for her wrist. Miranbai has sung of these pangs of separation and the intolerable anguish of a life-long pining for dissolving her identity in Krishna.

The quality of Miranbai's padas is very high. The padas beginning with the lines, "I have been fascinated by your face, my dear",³ or "I have found out a toy to play with; it is Rama. O Rana!"⁴ or "We have knowingly and deliberately drunk these cups of hemlock, Ranaji"⁵ or "The temple has delapidated and the Hamsa⁶ is still quite young"⁷ or "Please come today, my dearest"⁸ and a score of other poems which Gujarat would not willingly let die.

2. बाई मीरां के प्रमु गिरिधर नागर.
3. मुखढानी माया लागी रे.
4. रामरमकडुं जडियुं रे राणा.
5. झेर तो पीघां छे जाणी जाणी, राणाजी !
6. A swan; here, "Soul".
7. जूनुं तो थयुं रे देवळ जूनुं तो थयुं,
मारो हंसलो नानो ने देवळ जूनुं तो थयुं.
8. प्यारे दरसन दीज्यो आज.

Miranbai has written on only one subject—love; and on two only of its facets—union and separation. But there is enough variety of moods and expressions in her poems.

Her constant yearning for Krishna, the intensity of that yearning, her restlessness, her decision to sacrifice all for her love, her total and unqualified surrender to her Lord, her ecstasy and ebullience at the sight or even at hearing the foot-steps of her lover, all these have found in her poems an expression that is probably unsurpassed in mediaeval Gujarati poetry.

Narasimha and Miranbai

There is much that is similar in Narasimha and Miranbai, the two Immortals of Gujarati Poetry. Both are bhaktas first, and poets thereafter. Both, because of their unswerving bhakti, have suffered much at the hands of their kith and kin, whose ultimate value in life was worldly success, success here and now, success by any means whatsoever; and who believed in appearances rather than in reality. Both Narasimha and Miranbai claim to have experienced first hand the miraculous powers of their God; and both won from posterity the esteem and recognition that leaders of their contemporary society grudged them.

The poetry of both of them is inspired. Poetry, of course, was only a by-product of their passionate bhakti. But their poetry also is as sincere and genuine as their bhakti. They have been true to their own selves and they have said nothing that they did not believe in.

The quantitative output of Narasimha is greater than that of Miranbai. Krishnabhakti is the only inspiration of both Narasimha and Miranbai. But the variety of themes and topics one finds in the poetry of Narasimha is not seen in the poetry of Miranbai. In spite of that, Miranbai's poetry sometimes seems superior to that of Narasimha. Miranbai's is a natural heart of a gopi.

The relation of Miranbai with Krishna, as evinced in her poems on the whole, is one of the nearest kin; that of Narasimha with Krishna is one of a bhakta and his Bhagavan, God. Narasimha, again, does not possess in the same degree the loveliness of diction, delicacy of feeling and refinement of taste that Miranbai possesses. And the craving of love tempered by feminine coyness which permeates many of Miranbai's poems naturally and with ease, is conspicuous by its absence in the poems of Narasimha.

(II)

The 16th century is remarkable not for producing any major poet except Miranbai or a monumental work, but for

some poets whose works paved the way for Akho, Premanand and Samal, the immortal trio of the medieaval period.

Of these *Mandan Bandharo* (c.1480), seems to be a person with a power of observation and experience of the ways of the world. His *Ramayana* and *Rukmangada-Katha*, an akhyana, are ordinary pieces of composition. His *Prabodha-Batrasi* is a composition of 32 scores, each score consisting of 20 *chhappas*, in Chaupai metre of six lines each.

Prabodha-Batrasi is a didactic poem. The poet, intolerant of hypocrisy in the field of religion and of idiocy of man, wields his weapon of ruthless satire and exposes them by means of telling proverbs and racy idioms and exhorts man to follow the path of sanity and wisdom.

"If you persuade a fool to come, he will drift away. If you stop him, he will be cross. Bury the tail of a dog for six months: yet it will not be straight. To words of advice, he will pick up a row. Rusted iron can never be sharp"

Though not a poet of any remarkable ability, Mandan has curiously enough, profoundly influenced Akho, a major poet of mediaeval Gujarati literature, who flourished about a century after him.

Nakar (c. 1500-1575)

Nakar, a Vanik of Vadodara, wrote numerous akhyanas based on mythological subjects. Of these, *Shiva-Vivaha*, *Lava-Kushakhyana*, *Virata Parva*, *Nalakhyana* and *Okhaharan* are noteworthy.

Nakar has also rendered into Gujarati some cantos of the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. Unlike Bhalan, who did not deviate much from the original Sanskrit work, Nakar takes much away from the original, adds much of his own to it and holding the mirror up to his contemporary society, tries to keep the listeners spellbound. In this respect he is a forerunner of Premanand and serves as an important link between Bhalan and Premanand.

Not being born a Brahmin, Nakar was not privileged to recite like a Man Bhatta his akhyanas in public. He therefore gave them away to some of his Brahmin friends who recited them and made a living out of them.

9. આણીતાં આઘેઠ જાય, વારીતાં વાંકેઠ થાય.

‘સ્વાંન પૂંછ નલી લટ માસ, તુહિ ન છંડેઈ વંક અમ્યાસ.’

શીલ દેઅન્તાં સાહુમુ મઢેઈ, મુલિ લોહિ ન પોગર ચઢેઈ

Keshav Hridayam

Keshav Hridayam, also not a Brahmin, was born in Patan. He composed in 1536 *Krishnakrida*, a poem divided into 40 cantos running into seven thousand lines. The poem is based largely on the tenth canto of the *Bhagavata*. It is remarkable for its lucidity and perspicuity. The whole of its 13th canto is composed in "Shardoolavikreedita"—one of the metres used in classical Sanskrit poetry. The work is interspersed with padas in Vraj Bhasha and a hundred verses in Sanskrit, of which about 15 are composed by the poet himself.

Vishnudas (c. 1564-1632)

Vishnudas, was born in Khambhat. He has written several akhyanas among which *Lakshmanaharan*, *Shukadevakhyana*, *Chandrasahakhyana* and *Sudhanvakhyana* are noteworthy. Vishnudas has also translated several cantos of the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. He is, however, noted for his *Mosalun* and *Hundi*, which, for the first time in Gujarati, deal with the episodes of life, not of a god or a superhuman being, but of an ordinary mortal and bhakta—Narasimha Mehta. Premanand has borrowed freely from these two akhyanas as well as from the *Lakshmanaharan* and the *Sudama-charitra* of Vishnudas.

Madhavanala Kamakandala Dogdhaka (1518) by Ganapati is a *Padyavarta* running into 2500 couplets divided into eight parts. It is a story of love between Madhavanala, the hero, and Kamakandala, the heroine, a highly cultivated courtesan, who are separated from each other. This poem is remarkable for the fact that, unlike other poems of the type, it depicts the pangs of separation of the hero's heart. Since *Shringara* (the erotic) is the main sentiment delineated here, the poem begins with the poet's salutation to Kama Deva, the God of Love in Hindu mythology.

This work, along with *Madhavanala Kamakundala Rasa* (1560), a poem dealing with the same story, by Kushalalabha Vachak, anticipate Samal, who arrived about a century later.

Kushalalabha has also written *Maru Dhola Chupai* (1561), also a story of love. The hero of the poem, Dhola or Salhakumar has been married in his infancy to Maruvani or Maru, (a girl from Marwad)¹⁰. But ignorant of his marriage, he marries Malavani, a princess of Malwa, when he grows up.

10. It was customary to refer to the various queens in a royal court by the family names of their parents (e.g. Jadeji Rani, Hadi Rani etc.) or by the names of the regions or places they came from (e.g. Maruvani, Roha-walan Ba, etc.).

Maru, awaiting an invitation from Dhola, learns about his marriage with Malavani. Unable to bear the separation any longer, she sends messages to Dhola with a curlew and with many messengers. But no message of Maru ever reaches Dhola, thanks to the manoeuvres of Malavani. At long last Dhola receives a message from Maru from some wandering minstrels; in spite of Malavani's protests and lamentations he goes to Maru, and after passing through many tribulations brings her home. Malavani and Maru live like two sisters and every thing ends well.

The poem depicts beautifully the agony of Maru's heart, unable to bear the separation from Dhola and of the passionate attachment of Malavani to Dhola.

Rasa-Manjari (1579) of Vachharaj is based on a folk-tale. Premaraj, the hero of the story, is about to depart on a tour, when his wife Premavati asks him to bring *Stricharitra* (acts of inherent cleverness of women) with him on return. Premaraj goes to a town and sees a very beautiful young lady. On inquiry he learns that she, Rasa-Manjari, was the daughter-in-law of Dhana Sheth, a noted merchant and that her husband was out of station. Through the good offices of a courtesan, Premaraj, disguised as a woman, manages to get admittance to Rasa-Manjari's quarters and stays with her. In course of time, Rasa-Manjari finds out that her companion was a male. She falls in love with him and familiarizes him with acts of inherent cleverness of women. She then gets her husband killed, and making a fool of her father-in-law, departs with Premaraj.

Rasa-Manjari is, in fact, a collection of stories, depicting the inherent cleverness of women, particularly when it is a question of their self-interest.

It is a secular piece, and also a fore-runner of Samal.

CHAPTER V

17TH CENTURY

(I)

From 1573 to 1753 Gujarat was ruled by Mogul Governors. But with the decline of the Mogul Power at Delhi, political instability and insecurity went on increasing in Gujarat. Repeated failures of monsoon brought in their wake famines, acute scarcity of foodgrains and unprecedented rise in the cost of living. This resulted in riots, arson and loot in Ahmedabad. During the regime of Akbar, a fierce battle was fought at Bhucharmori, near Dhrol, in Saurashtra. After Akbar's death, the British defeated the Portuguese and established Kothis (Quarters) at Surat, Ghogha, Ahmedabad and Khambhat. In 1609 Malik Ambar plundered Surat. During the regime of Aurangzeb, there were revolts at Jamnagar and Chunval; and Shivaji raided and looted Surat twice.

Even during the lifetime of Aurangzeb, the Marathas started raising their head. Gujarat fell an easy prey to their greed and avarice; and they went on increasingly raiding it. In 1702 they collected tax from Surat; and plundered Surat in 1705 and then once again in 1707. After the death of Aurangzeb, Gujarat was plunged into complete chaos and anarchy.

This was an opportunity, a god-send, to the Marathas and they lost no time in exploiting it. Shahu Chhatrapati wrested in 1720 from Badshah Mahamad Shah of Delhi the permit to collect *choth* (tax) from Gujarat. In 1732, Damajirao Gaekwad established Gaekwadi power in Gujarat; and with the decline of the Peshawai, the central Maratha power at Pune, the Marathas of Gujarat became independent and entrenched themselves firmly in Gujarat and Saurashtra in 1753.

By this time the British had also worked their way in Gujarat and Saurashtra. They did not rest content only with their trade and commerce. Playing one Maratha power against the other, they acquired possession of several parts of Gujarat; and by 1805, they obtained also the right to collect *choth* from Surat.

In order to lend protection to the people of Saurashtra (then known as Kathiawad) from the ravages of the Marathas, Colonel Walker met in 1807 the ruling chiefs of Kathiawad and settled the amount of *Khandani* they were to pay to the British

in return for the protection promised them. 1818 saw the end of the Peshawai; and Gujarat came under the absolute sway of the British.

(II)

Akho (1591-1656)

Akho stands as a class by himself in the mediaeval period of Gujarati literature. He has created some of the most beautiful poetry from *Vedanta* philosophy and mystical experiences. To him *Jnana* (self realization), not poetry, was a desideratum.

From what is authentically known about his life, we learn that Akho was born in Jetalpur from where he migrated to Ahmedabad. He was a goldsmith by profession. Distressed by the futility of worldly relations and possessions, he left Ahmedabad in search of a *Guru* who could lead him to the path of self realization. He went as far as Gokul, Shri Nathji and Kashi, distinguished places of pilgrimage. But he returned disillusioned.

Akho started writing at the age of about 50 years and wrote or some 15 or 16 years. His works include *Panchikaran*, *Guru shishya samvad*, *Chitta-Vichara Samvad*, *Brahma Lila* (in Hindi), *Kaivalya-Gita*, *Anubhava Bindu*, *Akhe Gita*, and 746 *chhappas*. He is also said to have written *Parama-Pada-Prapti*, *Panchadashi*, *Akhajina Kakka* etc. But the authorship of these works is controversial.

Akho owes not a little to his predecessor Mandan, in creating poetry out of philosophy, in composing *chhappas* of six lines each in the metrical form of Chaupai, in making profuse use of proverbs as a means of expression, in exposing the mean and self-serving hypocrites posing as *gurus* and in hammering to smithereens the social and religious sham of his days. He has borrowed numerous lines *verbatim* or with some modifications from Mandan.

Panchikaran belongs to the early stages of Akho's creative life. In its 102 stanzas it deals with the *Utpatti* (creation), *Sthiti* (preservation and maintenance) and *Laya* (dissolution) of the world, according to the *Samkhya* School of Hindu Philosophy. It has no high poetic qualities; but it is noteworthy for the ease and simplicity of style, in which the poet has expressed some of the most abstruse philosophical thoughts.

In *Guru-Shishya Samvad*, Akho has advised the *Shisya* (disciple) not to look at the caste or status in social hierarchy of the *Guru*, described the characteristics of a true *Guru* and asked one, in the ultimate analysis, to become one's own *Guru*.

In *Chitta-Vichara Samvad*, the poet has again stressed the importance of accepting Govinda, the Lord who resides in one's own self (Soul) as the only *Guru*. He has also discussed the relation between the *Jiva* and *Atma*. This work as a poem is superior to the first two works.

Anubhava-Bindu is a short but lovely poem. In its 40 stanzas, Akho has explained the nature of *Maya* and emphasised the non-duality of *Jiva* and *Brahma*. He gives in a nutshell what he himself realized in regard to the relation between *Jiva*, *Jagat* (the world, the external reality) and *Brahma* (the ultimate reality). The whole poem is lucid and crystal clear like a spring.

Akhe Gita is the *magnum opus* of Akho. It is a testimony to everything that Akho arrived at as a result of serious reflection and personal experience of a life time. In this work, Akho has explained in simple, direct, lucid style the true nature of *Chitta Shakti*, *Maya Shakti*, and *Prakriti Shakti*, the greatness and majesty of *Jnana*, *Bhakti* and *Vairagya*, and the fundamental unity of *Jiva*, *Ishvara* and *Kaivalya Brahma*. By comparing *Maya* with a house of glass (reminiscent of Shelley who compared life with "a dome of many-coloured glass") Akho says, it is through *Maya* that the three, who are in reality one, seem to be three different entities.

In a way, *Akhe Gita* is a re-statement in a beautiful and organised way of whatever Akho said in his previous works. At the end of his spiritual odyssey, the realized soul that the poet is, bursts out into a rhapsody : "O! what a new kind of joy today that that which eluded the senses has swum into their ken!"¹¹

Muktaka like *Chhappas* are characteristic of Akho. Composing *Chhappas* was a continual activity with Akho all through his life. Akho has written 746 *chhappas* and sorted them subject wise into 45 *Angas* (parts). These *chhappas* are of six lines each, written in the metre *chaupai*. In these short, pithy, caustic stanzas Akho has ruthlessly exposed the hypocrisy, cant, and malevolence of persons posing as men of God and the shams of his contemporary society. His unerring insight has seen through things everywhere; and his mastery over the spoken word has exposed in unambiguous and revealing terms the evils of the socio-religious system of his days. Language to him was but a means to an end and never an end in itself. Akho aims straight at what he has to say and says it without caring much about the niceties of language and often through colloquial words, phrases, idioms and proverbs. Scores of his lines have been current coin in Gujarati.

11. अभिनवो आनन्द आज अगोचर गोचर हुं ए.

Among the contemporaries of Akho, Narahari (alive in 1621) is noted for translating the *Bhagavad Gita* for the first time¹² in Gujarati; and Vishvanath Jani for *Mosalacharitra*, among others, which probably inspired Premanand to compose his immortal work *Kunvarbai-nun Mamerun*—the episode describing the customary celebration of Simanta of Narasimha Mehta's daughter Kunvarbai. Vishvanath's *Prema-Pachchisi*, based on an episode in *Bhagavata*, when Uddhava goes to Gokul to deliver a message from Krishna to Gopis, suffering from unbearable pangs of separation from Krishna, is a deeply moving poem. Of the interpolated padas in Narsimha's *Harmala* some are assumed to have been written by Vishvanath.

Shivanand (1600-1644) is known for his eventide devotional songs, *Aratis*. These are recited in chorus, when a lamp is waved in front of the idol of a god to the accompaniment of music of bells, conches and other instruments. Shivanand's poems have not left unsung a single incident in the daily routine in the life of his god, such as his bath, his dress, his dinner, his amours. Unlike the orthodox, who emphasise the points of difference between Hari and Hara (Vishnu or Krishna and Shiva), Shivanand has stressed the essential unity of the two. He says:

They two (Hari and Hara) are in effect one: do not consider them different from each other. You will easily cross this ocean of the world by worshipping the simple-hearted Bhoodhara (Shiva).¹³

Shivanand has written *Aratis* of Krishna, Shiva and Mata (Shakti). They are sung even today. Some of the poems of Shivanand are in Hindi or Vraj Bhasha.

Premanand (1636-1734)

By his numerous akhyanas peopled with men and women, young and old, of different levels of culture, and by his skilful narration of various episodes ranging from the humorous and the grotesque to the tragic, Premanand has taken the form of akhyana to its zenith. He stands supreme as an objective poet in the mediaeval period.

Numerous legends have grown around the life and work of Premanand; and the authorship of a number of akhyanas passing under his name is controversial. Instead of discussing these at any length in a book like this, we shall do well to restrict ourselves only to well-established facts.

12. Pandit Dhanraj is said to be the first to translate *Bhagavad Gita* in 1604. But he has given only a summary of every *adhyaya* (canto) of the *Gita*.

13. ए वे एकस्वरूप अन्तर नव धरशो, प्रभु अन्तर.
भोला मूढरने भजतां (२) भवसागर तरशो. जय देव जय देव ।

According to these, Premanand was alive between 1636 and 1734. His creative activity had started by about 1676 and it had extended upto the first half of the 18th century. Both his parents had died while he was young and he was orphaned. His father's name was Krishnaram Bhatt; and the name of his *Guru* was Ramcharan. Premanand stayed at Vadodara and was a kathakar (teller of religious and puranic stories) by profession. Because of a severe famine in parts of Gujarat about Vadodara, he stayed for some years at Surat in search of livelihood; and then for some years at Nandarbar under the patronage of its ruling chief. His popularity as a kathakar was phenomenal and he had amassed considerable wealth.

In the first quarter of Premanand's life, there was peace and stability in Gujarat. But the atmosphere began to be disturbed from 1664 onwards because of the raids of Marathas, famines, acute scarcity and the resultant exorbitant prices of food stuffs and the bare necessities of life. So, during the major period of his life, Premanand saw chaos and disorder.

But, perhaps because of fatalism, people being conditioned to accept stoically things as they came,¹⁴ political stability or instability had little direct impact on writers, including Premanand.

The creative output of Premanand is very large. He has composed akhyanas from the episodes of *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and *Bhagavata* and from some miraculous incidents of the life of Narasimha Mehta. He has written about 40 akhyanas, (excluding several works of doubtful authorship) during the 45 years of his creative life.

Most of Premanand's akhyanas have almost been treated as scriptures to be recited at the celebration of particular socio-religious occasions. For example, his *Okha-Haran* was recited in the months of Chaitra and Vaishakha, *Dashamaskandha* in the four months of monsoon, *Mamerun* at the celebration of *Simanta*, *Narasimha Mehta-na Bap-nun Shraddha*, on the occasion of *Shraddha*,¹⁵ *Sudama-Charitra*, every Saturday, *Hundi*, every Sunday, and *Devi-Charitra* in Navaratri,¹⁶ with utmost faith and seriousness in many households in Gujarat. The practice of singing particular akhyanas on particular occasions lasted for over 100 years after the death of the poet.

14. It is significant that the entire Gujarati literature till the end of the 18th century is a-political in nature.

15. A religious ceremony performed on certain days after the death and subsequently, annually on the date of death in the dark half of the month of *Bhadrápada*, of a near relative.

16. The first nine days of the bright half of the month of *Ashvina*.

Premanand, like many masters of world literature, has borrowed freely from his predecessors. Of these, he is particularly indebted to Nakar, Vishnudas and Vishvanath Jani. He has not only made use of some of the incidents invented or described by these poets but also of their several lines *verbatim* or with some modifications, in his akhyanas.

Nalakhyana is the best and the finest of Premanand's akhyanas. It deals with the story of Nala, a king and his queen Damayanti, who through the machinations of Kali, an embodiment of the forces of evil, are sent to exile, parted, and each made to pass through a series of terrible vicissitudes and finally with the departure of Kali, united and restored to their former happiness. To the plot, based largely on the *Nalopakhyana* of *Mahabharata*, Premanand has added many incidents invented by himself, and by his unusual power of narration and description invested it with a rare charm.

In spite of the fact that not all changes made by Premanand in the original plot do credit to him as a great writer, *Nalakhyana* is decidedly the best akhyana in Gujarati literature.

Premanand is at his best in the delineation of humour and pathos in it. The first *Svayamvara*¹⁷ of Damayanti, where the four gods—Indra, Agni, Varuna and Yama—aspiring for Damayanti's hand in marriage, assume the form of Nala and make fools of themselves, and her second *Svayamvara*, arranged in order to find out Nala, when Rituparna, an aspirant driven by excessive self-love indulges in boasting and bragging, are occasions for the full play of Premanand's humour. Similarly, Damayanti's lament at finding herself deserted by Nala at midnight in a dangerous forest and her cry of anguish "Hari! you, companion of the Truth! nowhere do I fit in!"¹⁸ when she was charged with the theft of a necklace, at the palace of her aunt, are extremely moving.

The poet is said to have composed this akhyana in Nandarbar, in order to console and divert the mind of his patron, the ruling chief, who had recently lost his wife.

Dashama-skandha was composed during the closing years of the poet's life. It remained incomplete at the 52nd canto; and was completed by one of the poet's disciples, Sundar Mevado.

17. It was customary to convene an assembly of princes from whom a princess used to choose one as her husband. Sometimes, the father of the princess laid down certain tests to determine the eligibility of an aspirant.

18. हे हरि सत्यतणा संघाती, हरि हुं तो क्यांये नथी ज समाती.

The *Dashama-skandha* of *Bhagavata*, particularly its delineation of the fun and frolics of the early life of Shri Krishna, is the source of most of the lyrics (*padas*) and many of the akhyanas of mediaeval Gujarati poetry.

Premanand's *Dashama-skandha* is not a translation of the tenth canto of *Bhagavata*, though the poet means it to be one. It is, at best, an adaptation with suitable modifications, additions and omissions. And the many moving descriptions of filial love and happy home life and family life are all Premanand's own. He excels in the depiction of a mother's tender love with all its undercurrents of possessiveness, fear, mistrust and jealousy, as his Devaki and Jashoda convincingly show.

In *Sudama-Charitra*, Premanand has narrated how gracefully and graciously Krishna, the Lord of Dwarka of the mansions and palaces of gold, treated his school friend, the poor Sudama, as his personal guest and without driving him to the indignity of asking for a favour, helped him to an extent and in a way that surprised all concerned, except, of course, Krishna himself. The presence of Sudama revives in Premanand's Krishna the old naughty school boy who loved to indulge in practical jokes, when he quietly suffers Sudama putting on once again his tattered garments while on his way back home.

Narasimha Mehta's *Sudama-Charitra* deals with just the major incidents; while Premanand's is a full-fledged akhyana, offering the poet ample scope for his art of narration marked by characterization, humour, and delineation of sentiments.

Kunvarbai-nun Mamerun is also a literary masterpiece. In this akhyana, Premanand has narrated the incident of *Mamerun* (Or *Mosalun*),¹⁹ which Narasimha Mehta offered on the occasion of the *Simanta* of his daughter Kunvarbai. The work is memorable for the graphic description of Narasimha's bullock-cart, his companions, the garage given them as a guest house by Kunvarbai's father-in-law, and of the agony of Kunvarbai's heart at the ridicule her father, engrossed in other-worldiness, was subjecting himself to, and at the absence of her mother (who had died) who would have saved the situation by acting with decorum in the conventional way. The simple faith of Narasimha, the helpless and pitiable plight of Kunvarbai, the snobbery, arrogance, malice and biting sarcasm of all Kunvarbai's 'in-laws', the sudden arrival, in the nick of time, of Krishna in the guise of an agent of Narasimha with an unending train of trays filled with the costliest gifts Kunvarbai's cunning

19. A ceremony when parents offer gifts to their daughter, son-in-law and other in-laws on the occasion of the daughter's *Simanta*.

mother-in-law and crafty grand-mother-in-law had, at Kunvarbai's request, detailed with heart within and God overhead, keeping in view the circumstances of the poor father," have all been ably portrayed. *Mamerun* is a fine texture formed by an artist with interlacing strands of humour and pathos.

The fact that Premanand has borrowed his plots from *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Bhagavata* and other *Puranas* does not mean that his akhyanas are just free translations or adaptations.

Since in the middle ages, listening to the tales from *Puranas* from the Brahmins was one of the few means of entertainment and culture. Premanand borrowed from the *Puranas*, major incidents of his stories; and by his creative genius, power of observation, knowledge of human nature and art of story-telling breathed life into them; and through them he depicted the life of contemporary Gujarat. Krishna, Vasudeva, Devaki, Nanda, Jashoda, Nala, Damayanti and scores of other characters created by him seem not so much belonging to the age of the *Puranas* as to mediaeval Gujarat. Premanand knows through and through his Gujarat, its men and women of all castes and professions; and in fact, talks about their manners and customs, their psychocultural orientation, their approach towards life. That is why Nanalal, another distinguished poet, describes him as "the most Gujarati of Gujarati poets, modern or ancient."

Gujarati-ness is both Premanand's strength and weakness. Because of this Gujarati-ness, the great and majestic characters of the *Puranas* sometimes think and speak and act as some petty and mediocre persons of Gujarat of Premanand's days.

Like all mediaeval writers, Premanand aims at touching the most sensitive side of his audience's heart. But instead of just telling a story, he concentrates primarily on *Rasa-Nishpatti* (evoking stage by stage and crystallizing particular sentiments of the listener's heart). By an uninterrupted flow of his narration, where he does not miss a single relevant detail or sentiment, he keeps the suspense of his listeners alive. Sometimes, by a series of beautiful pen-pictures he appeals to the imagination of his listeners; sometimes he pampers the simple childlike curiosity of the unsophisticated among his audience by giving them a long stereotyped list of details while describing a forest or an assembly or a banquet; sometimes he lists the characteristics of a male or a female beauty. Of course, even on such occasions, he does not fail to sustain his listeners' interest by making his descriptions a treat to listen to by a rhythmic recitation of the details or characteristics in alphabetical order, or adorned with alliterations or rhymes. He makes his listeners laugh by his satire or irony

or wit or humour, crude or subtle: and sometimes he moves them to tears by his delineation of the pathetic or the tragic. Premanand stands unsurpassed in the art of developing sentiment, step by step, to its climax.

Knowing well the flitting nature of the human mind, Premanand does not dwell long on a single sentiment. While delineating *Vira-rasa* (the heroic sentiment), for example, he leavens it with a requisite measure of *Shringara* (the erotic), *Hasya* (the comic) or *Karuna* (the pathetic), and thus keeps the minds and hearts of his listeners captivated.

Premanand is as much an accomplished artist in working out a transition from one *Rasa* to another as he is in bringing a *Rasa* to its climax. The transition from one *Rasa* to another is so smooth and unobtrusive that very often the listener notices it when the new *Rasa* reaches its climax. By a skilful manipulation of several compatible *Rasas*, he nourishes and brings to fruition the one principal *Rasa* of his akhyana. Thus, like a wizard, he makes his listeners realize unity in diversity and diversity in unity.

Premanand is the greatest of the objective poets of Gujarat.

Dramas of Premanand

In the *Prachin-Kavya-Mala* published from Vadodara, three dramas, viz. *Satyabhama-Roshadarshika*—akhyana, *Panchali—Prasannakhyana* and *Tapatyakhyana* were published in 1892, 1893 and 1894 respectively. The authorship of these dramas was ascribed to Premanand. But it was challenged from the very beginning; and scholars from both sides joined the fray. Much heat was generated; and the controversy went on till 1909, when Narasimharao Divatia, in his excellent paper on *Premanand-nan Natako* (the Dramas of Premanand) finally put it at rest by conclusively proving that the dramas could never have been written by Premanand.

Who, then, could be the author? Several attempts have been made to establish the authorship of those dramas. After considerable discussion, it was generally believed that the dramas in question might have been written by Chhotalal Narbheram Bhatt and Nathashankar Shastri; and Keshavlal Dhruva probably in full knowledge of the authorship, might have helped in their publication.

The dramas have only slight literary merit. They are no longer read or discussed. The controversy, therefore, is not likely to be revived in future.

CHAPTER VI
18TH CENTURY
(I)

Samal Bhatt (Circa 1690-1769)

Samal was an inhabitant of Venganpur, Ahmedabad. His father's name was Vireshvar. Being attracted by his art of story telling, Rakhidas, a patidar (landlord) of Sinhuji had invited Samal to stay with him.

Samal has written akhyanas like *Shivapurana*, *Angada-Vishti*, *Shukadevakhyana*, *Vishveshvarakhyana*, *Ravana-Mandodari-Samvad*, etc. based on plots borrowed from Puranas. But, maybe because Samal's akhyanas came not long after the akhyanas of Premanand, they suffered in comparison and failed to make any mark.

Samal is best known as a writer of *Padyavartas*,¹ of which *Padmavati*, *Rupavati*, *Nanda-Batrissi*, *Suda Bahoteri*, *Simhasana-Batrissi*, *Panchadanda-ni Varta*, *Vinechat-ni Varta*, *Baras-Kasturi*, *Sundar Kamdar*, *Madan Mohana*, are well-known. Samal has also composed *Udyama-Karma-Samvad*, *Ramchhodji-na Shaloko* (or *Bodana Akhyana*), *Abharam Kuli-na Shaloko* (or *Rustom Bahadur-no Pavado*), *Samal Ratna Mala*, *Rakhidas Charitra*, etc.

Padmavati, composed in 1718, is the first *Padyavarta* of Samal. In it the poet has told about Pushpasen, the prince of Champavati,—who being exiled by his own father and passing through various vicissitudes of fortune, marries *Padmavati*, a daughter of the king of Dharanagari, through the good offices of a courtesan and returns home to the delight of all.

In *Simhasana Batrissi*, Samal has told the story of Raja Vikrama, a legendary king, a man of many parts, an erudite scholar, a connoisseur and patron of poetry and the arts, an embodiment of wisdom and justice, and a subjugator of supernatural beings. In *Simhasana Batrissi* while Bhoja is about to ascend Vikrama's throne, each one of the thirty-two dolls on which rests the throne, comes to life and tells the king a story, relating the exploits of Vikrama.

Madan Mohana, one of the best *Padyavartas* of Samal, depicts the course of love between princess Mohana and the son of the King's chief minister, Madan.

1. Please see Appendix H.

Samal, like Premanand, has borrowed much from his predecessors. Most of his stories have their roots either in some earlier Padyavarta or in Sanskrit works like *Brihat-Katha-Manjari*, or *Katha-Sarit-Sagara* or in some folk-tale. Unlike the poet of Akhyana, a poet of Padyavarta is not obliged to stick to the original plot. He can change the names of the characters, add new imaginary episodes, or change their sequence. Therefore, roots of some of the stories or of some of the incidents of Samal's stories are traceable to some old stories.

The canvas of Samal's stories is very wide. Samal has created a variety of characters and episodes. In this, there is, of course, much that is borrowed from old literary works and tales; yet there is much in it that is Samal's own as well.

From what he had heard or read about and what he could invent, Samal could easily construct plots of his stories; or inflate, if necessary, any story by introducing in it riddles, aphorisms and didacticism.

Riddles are an inevitable part of Samal's stories. Because of their wit, they arouse and satisfy the curiosity of listeners. Sometimes, the heroine marries the man who solves some particular riddles; and sometimes, some particular riddles help one character recognise the other.

But Samal is more of a story-teller than a poet. His descriptions of the characteristics of particular types of men and women, forests, cities, royal courts etc. are stereotyped and conventional. Sometimes he winds them up by remarking, "they are too numerous to be described".² While Premanand does not miss a single opportunity fully to delineate human emotions and sentiments, Samal seems to skip over it.

Samal's stories were designed primarily to provide entertainment to simple, hardworking, unsophisticated rural men and women of the community. They, therefore, contain everything—miracles, wit, worldly wisdom, flashes of insight into human nature, understanding of the ways of the world, sudden twists and turns, in fact everything that would serve the poet's purpose.

Samal's female characters are brighter and smarter than his male characters. Stories like *Hamsavati*, *Padmavati*, *Premavati*, *Rasa-Manjari*, *Karpura-Manjari*, *Bhadra-Bhamini*, *Vidya-Vilasini*, *Kamavati*, *Tarangavati*, etc. derive their titles from the names of their heroines. These heroines are bold, shrewd, intelligent, resourceful and enterprising enough to wade their way through any number of adverse circumstances. Very often, they are in no way inferior to men; and sometimes they prove to be more than a match for them. They win over the hearts of men and

2. कहेतां नावे पार.

are a source of infinite happiness to them. Among Samal's female characters there are some who resolve to remain unmarried for life and they have strength enough to stick to their determination.³ And there are women who fall in love at first sight and marry the man of their choice.⁴ There are women who determine to marry the man who could solve particular riddles put to them, and there are married women who, disguised as men, win over the hearts of lovely young ladies by their wit and acts of heroism, marry them and give them to their own husbands! There are women who go to the Shmashana⁵ and perform certain rituals there. There are women, who being weak enough to succumb to the slightest temptations, leave their husbands and run away, and there are women who because of the deep love for their husbands die of shock on the mere hearing of the news--correct or incorrect--of their husband's death. There are women who save the life of their husbands by giving them unexpected help in the nick of time; and there are women who, driven by the fury of vengeance, take the life of their husbands. There are women whose devotion to their husbands is phenomenal; and there are women whose virtue is easy.

Both qualitatively and quantitatively, Samal is a great storyteller. And since there are no significant Padyavartas in the later period, he is the last great writer of Padyavartas of the medieval period.

(II)

The Eighteenth century was a period of chaos and disorder. The Mogul power had declined. The policy of Aurangzeb and the raids of Marathas marked the beginning of an era of disorder and misery. Gujarat's wealth was destroyed; its agriculture, ruined; its commerce, crippled; and its culture, arrested.

In a period like this, except for Dayaram who flourished towards the end of the century when peace returned, literature did not break any new ground; nor were there poets of a high order.

The period largely abounds in the padas of Jnana Bhakti and Vairagya, as it was during the period of Narasimha and Miranbai. But the priority changed. During the days of Narasimha-Miran the number of padas of Bhakti was larger

3. According to Indian Traditions, a man could remain unmarried for life; but a woman never!
4. According to Indian Traditions, marriages of sons and daughters were, as a rule, arranged by their parents.
5. Hindu Cremation ground—a place supposed to be haunted by ghosts, witches and other evil spirits, where even men would shudder to go after dusk.

than the number of padas of Jnana and Vairagya. And the Bhakti was essentially Prema-Laksana. In the poetry of the 18th century, the number of padas of Jnana and Vairagya is more than the number of padas of Bhakti; and the Bhakti is largely the Bhakti of Shiva, Krishna and Mata (Shakti).

Most of the poets of this period came of the so-called lower strata of society and hailed from the country. The language, therefore, of their poetry was not polished. But coming as it did straight from the heart, its appeal to the masses was powerful.

This is, again, a period largely of short padas, rather than of long narrative compositions like the akhyana. Besides the traditional padas of Jnana, Bhakti and Vairagya, this period also provided a harvest of Garbas and Garbis,⁶ Kafis, Chabakhas, Aratis, and Rajiyas.

The poets of the Svaminarayana sect stand out as a class by themselves.

Vallabh Mevada (alive in 1700)

Vallabh Mevada is the most distinguished writer of garbas in this period. Since no garbas, if any, of earlier writers are available, it is safe to presume that the popularity of Vallabh's garbas might have consigned them to oblivion.

Vallabh has extolled the glory of Amba, Bahuchara, and Kali, the three leading goddesses in Gajarat. He was a resident of Ahmedabad, but passed most of his time at Chunval, the seat of goddess Bahuchara. He was such an ardent devotee of the goddess that pilgrims to Bahucharaji even today greet each other with "Vallabh Dhola-ni Jai" (Victory to Vallabh and Dhola).⁷

In *Anand-no Garbo*, Vallabh extols the power and grandeur of goddess Bahuchara. In *Mahakali-no Garbo* he narrates the story of the ruin brought upon the House of the king of Pavagadh by the anger of goddess Mahakali. In *Ambaji-na Shangar-no Garbo* the poet describes in minute details the beauty of the limbs of the Mother and of several ornaments that enhance it.

Vallabh has also written *Kalikal-no Garbo* (the garbo of the Iron Age, (the period of utter moral degradation) and *Kajoda-no Garbo* (the garbo of an ill-matched pair).

He describes the scarcity and famine of the year 1731: "Food-grains have become very dear; and irreligion has spread beyond redemption. Who was to sit in judgement over whom, when each man exceeded the other in committing excesses? Those

6. Please see Appendix I.

7. Dhola, also an ardent devotee, is said to be Vallabh's brother.

who were brought forth from their loins and womb and who shared the element of both (parents) had to be abandoned for the sake of the stomach, and children had to be sold away".

In the *Kajoda-no Garbo*, a young girl married to an extremely old man, pours the anguish of her heart before *Gor-ma*⁹: "O mother Gor (Gouri)! you gave me an old husband; and ruined my whole life! What should I tell you? ... Mother, I am at the crest of my youth, and he has become hideous (with age) ... O Mother! I am exactly sixteen: and he is eighty ... O Mother! On a cold winter night, one would love to enjoy various pleasures; but he, the old fool, behaves as if he has lost his speech ... O Mother! why was I not strangled at my birth? not poisoned and killed?"¹⁰

The popularity of Vallabh's garbas was so phenomenal that barring a few garbas by other writers, his are the only garbas that have survived.

Pritam or Pritamdas (1720(?)-1798)

Pritam or Pritamdas a Ramanandi Sadhu has translated the *Bhagvad gita* into Gujarati; and written *Ekadasha Skandha*, *Dharam Gita*, *Saras Gita*, *Jnana Gita*, and *Adhyatma Ramayana*, besides many other works.

Pritam is known most for his Padas as Narasimha is known for his Prabhatiyans and Akho, for his Chhappas. Pritam has written padas of Jnana, Bhakti, Vairagya and Shringara, in which he has imparted moral and religious instruction in simple

8. अन्न अति मोंघा हुवां, हो बहुचरी ! अधर्म व्याप्यो असाध्य,
को कोनी करणी जुवे, हो बहुचरी ! एक थकी एक अगाध,
उदर थकी उपजावियां, हो बहुचरी ! उभय तणी जे अंश,
ते तन पेट तजावियां, हो बहुचरी ! विक्रय कीधो वंश.
9. Gouri, the Mother, who is supposed to bless her young devotees with suitable husbands.

10. गोरमा ! घरडो के भरभार के मुजने आपियो रे, लोल,
गोरमा ! धिक्क कीधो अवतार, के शुं कहूं तुजने रे, लोल.
गोरमा ! माहं थयुं जोबन के पियु वरवो थयो रे, लोल.
गोरमा ! सोळ मुने प्रत्यक्ष के एने हेंसी थयां रे, लोल.
गोरमा ! शियाळानी रात के स्वाद, होये घणा रे, लोल.
गोरमा ! मूरख घरडी जात के जेवो गुंगणो रे लोल.
गोरमा ! जणतां न दीघी फांसी के विख दई मारती रे, लोल.

Translation, in parts, of these extracts from both the Garbas is reproduced with thanks *Milestones in Gujarati Literature* by K. M. Jhaveri.

language. In some of his padas, Pritam has exposed the social evils of his days, but this he has done, unlike Akho and Bhojo, without vehemence and bitterness. His padas like the ones beginning with the lines, "The path to Hari (God) is for the brave; it is not for the cowards to take it!"¹⁰ or, "O flute, you seemed to be an enemy to the women of Vraja"¹¹ or "O my tongue! why do you feel so lazy at singing the praise of Hari?"¹² have been extremely popular.

There is a wide variety of forms in Pritam. He has written Kakka, Mahina (Months), Tithi (Dates), Var (Days), Dhol, Garbi, Arati, Thal, Prarthana, Chetavani etc. But the subjects on which he has written are just three: Jnana, Vairagya and Bhakti. Of these, *Saras-Gita* must needs be mentioned.

Shri Krishna has gone away to Mathura. From there, he has sent Uddhava to Gokul to console Nanda,¹³ Yashoda¹⁴ and the Gopis. In reply to the highly learned advice proffered by Uddhava, the Gopis narrate their reminiscences of Krishna's plays in Gokul and describe their pangs of separation from Him. Deeply touched at the sight of this unique manifestation of Bhakti characterized by love, Uddhava, in turn, feels gratified and returns to Mathura.

Pritam is a poet of Jnana, Bhakti and Vairagya. By the sweetness and simplicity of his diction, he is more popular than most of the poets of the mediaeval period.

Ratno

Ratno flourished about 1740. Mahina (*Months*) is his only work available so far. It belongs to the form known as *Barmasi* (related with 12 months). In his Mahina, Ratno has delineated the emotions rising in the heart of Radha, suffering from the pangs of separation from Krishna, at the sight of the beauty and the mood of nature during each of the twelve months of the year. The description of the beauty of nature, changing with the change of seasons, and its effect on the heart of young love-lorn ladies, establish this poem as the best *Barmasi* in Gujarati literature.

Dhiro (1753(?)-1825)

Dhiro was illiterate; he knew no Sanskrit. Yet, through his association with ascetics and holy men he had acquired a fair understanding of Yoga¹⁵ and Jnana.

10. हरिनो मारग छे शूरानो कायरनुं नहि काम जोने.

11. हो वांसलडी ! वेरण मइ लागी रे व्रजनी नारने.

12. जीमलडी ! तने हरिगुण गातां भावहुं आळस क्यांथी रे ?

13. Krishna's foster father.

14. Krishna's foster mother.

15. A science teaching how to bring the activities of the mind under control and reach the stage of ecstasy.

He is said to pack copies of his poems in small pipes of bamboo and consign them to the waters of the river Mahi. His poems thus reached people and got currency.

Dhiro has written akhyanas like *Rana-Yajna*, *Ashvamedha* and *Draupadi Vastra Haran*. But he is known best for his Kafis, a type of pada, where the first line or the *Tek* (Refrain) rhymes with the alternate lines of the subsequent five stanzas of two lines each. Most of the poems of Dhiro are Kafis. And the most remarkable among them are *Svarupa-ni Kafi* (the Kafis of Svarupa, nature). These Kafis explain the nature of Guru, Maya (Illusion), Mana (Mind), Trisha (Avarice), Lakshmi (Wealth), Yauvan (youth) and Kaya (Body). In these Svarupa-ni Kafis Dhiro is at his best.

Dhiro's Kafis beginning with the lines

He, whom Rama protects¹⁶ or

Why proudly do you strut? you have lost your way and fallen into the well (pit) of the world.¹⁷

"Broken are the shackles of birth and death, and unlocked are the gates of the palace of Brahma",¹⁸ were very popular.

In his Kafis, Dhiro has explained by means of apt illustrations from everyday life, the futility of worldly possessions and attachments, the ephemeral nature of man's pleasure, and the deep peace one finds by a true and unwavering trust in God.

Besides Kafis, Dhiro has also written *Aval-Vani* (Mystic (riddle) poetry of some esoteric religious cults). The statements made in such poems are apparently incongruous; but deep below, there is an inner meaning which records the mystic experiences and emotions of the poets in their spiritual progress.

Lines like "The howdah has swallowed the mighty elephant; the saddle has swallowed the horse; the fence has dried upon the clothes; and foam has gulped down the sea. The rabbit in its wisdom overpowers the lion in the fray"¹⁹ are typical examples of Dhiro's *Aval-Vani*.

16. जेने राम राखे रे.

17. फूल्यो शुं फरे रे? भूलो भवकूपमां पडयो.

18. भांगी गई भवबेडीओ, ऊघड्यां भ्रमभोवननां ताळां रे.

19. अंबाढीए गजराज गळियो, घोढाने गळी गयुं जीण;

बल्ल उपर वाढ सुकाणी, समुद्रने गळी गयुं फीण;

शशाली तो शाणो यईने रे, शार्दूलने नाखे पटमां.

Dhiro has also written *Jnana-Kakko*, Alphabet of knowledge, a didactic poem, the first word of whose every line begins with the appropriate letter, in its proper sequence, of the Gujarati alphabet. He has also written garbis; Dhol, etc.

Narbheram (1768-1852)

Narbheram is known for his *Bodana-ni Muchh-nan Pado*—the padas about the moustaches of Bodana. They are so termed because, moustaches are considered to be a sign of manliness, and one who performs an act of heroism could, with legitimate pride, twirl and twist his moustaches. Bodana, a resident of Dakore and an humble devotee of Ranchhodji at Dwarka, accomplished a seemingly impossible feat of bringing the idol of his Deity from Dwarka to Dakore, against heavy odds. This was an act of heroism, which in the poet's opinion entitled him to keep the ends of his twisted moustaches pointing upwards. The padas describe in a virile style the difficult course of Bodana's ultimate achievement.

Narbheram, or Narbho, as he politely calls himself, is also known for his pada "*Nanun ape Narabho Re*" (Narbho gives you money), which he addressed to Ranchhodji, the presiding Deity of Dwarka, when he (Narbho) was refused a seal impression on his hand, unless he paid a specified sum as toll for the privilege of having a dip in the holy waters of the river Gomati and entry to the Temple.

The poet admonishes the Deity, the Lord of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and riches, for being obliged to depend on money extorted from penniless individuals like the poet himself—money extorted for the purpose of—yes, of enjoying the mere feel of it and then putting it in safe custody. He also chastises the Deity for his toll-collectors, who just go by appearances and have no eye to find out who is really rich enough to pay the toll and who is not. This is an admonishment which only a true and selfless lover is privileged to administer.

The poet says:

Narbho gives you money: Krishna! you may spend it. Hold it tight, you, on the dome of whose temple flies a white flag.

Had I known you, Keshava, to be deceitful, why should I have come these many miles? I had heard that seal impressions are given to sadhus free of charge; that is why my mind ran impatiently to see you. So, please remove your guards and let me have a glimpse of you. When you see someone dressed in an ascetic's clothes, you do not look for anything else, and impress your seal on him. But seeing a turban on my head, you force me to receive the seal impression (by paying toll).

This is how you judge people! Please comprehend the meaning of what I hint at in a nutshell, you Krishna, you dark one! You (deliberately) suffer defeat at the hands of people. No one can defeat you. Give up, therefore, your obstinacy. Hari! Narbho says, by the grace of Chhotalal;²⁰ that there is no oil in this oilseed. All that can be taken from me is the rosary with the beads of which I repeat Hari! Hari!²¹

Bapusaheb Gaekwad (1779-1843)

Bapusaheb Gaekwad a Maharashtrian of Vadodara, wrote in Gujarati, padas of Jnana and Vairagya. He was a disciple of Dhiro whom, in accordance with the tradition, he served with utmost humility and no personal pride, even to the extent of preparing the *Hookah* for the Master. He has written some poems of Jnana. And the "Mahina" he wrote in 1834, unlike other poems of the *genre*, instead of portraying the sad feelings of separation, depict the supreme bliss the poet enjoys every month of the year through his realization of Brahma. Some of his padas of Brahmajnana have an elaborate rhyme scheme, which cannot be reproduced in translation. A sample in original Gujarati, however, might give the reader an idea of the music Bapusaheb has been able to create out of simple words:

Pratham Sadguruno satsanga sacho,
Bijo je karo te jano kacho.
Harinama bhoolya eja padyo khancha,
Mate tame Sadgurune nishadin jacho;
Evun samajye ave par,
Male sar, ekatar,
Mate khar, adhar
Neti par, Vishvadhar,

20. His Guru.

21. नाणुं आपे नरभो रे, वावरजो छोगाळा !

गांठ मारजो ताणी रे, घोळी धजावाळा !

कपटी केशव जाणत तो शाने आवत पचाश जोजन ?

सांभळ्युं श्रवणे, साधुने छापे छे, माटे मळवा धश्युं मन,

दरशन द्योने रे, दूर करी पाळा.

नाणुं०

भेख देखीने नजर नथी करता, छाप आपो छो हरि !

पाघढी भाळी छाप खावी छबीला ! परीक्षा तो एवी करी.

समस्या लेजो समजी रे, जे कही कानड काळा !

नाणुं०

हारो छो जनयी, नथी हरवाता, माटे हरि ! हठ मेल,

कहे नरभो छोटालालप्रतापे, नथी ए तलमां तेल.

लेवानुं मुज पासे रे, हरि हरि जपमाळा

नाणुं०

Namarahit lejo mani, mani ke tej jnani!²²

In some of his Kafis, Bapusaheb has given a lucid exposition of Vedanta principles. He says, for instance, in one of them:

The earthen pot was full of water; and the sun happened to enter it. The pot broke to pieces; and I picked up a row with him who broke my pot:

My sun was there in the pot; and you broke it, you brute! that the pot is lost is of no consequence, but my sun has run away.

Where shall I see him how? O! how shall I find him?²³ Bapusaheb, however, is best known for his *Rama Rajiyo*, a funeral song, a dirge,²⁴ in which he descants upon the six great enemies of man, viz. inordinate Desire, Anger, Avarice, Delusion, Pride and Envy.²⁵ In many parts of Gujajrat this *Rama-Rajiyo* was sung, instead of a common '*Rajiyo*', at a funeral.

Bhojo (1785-1850)

Bhojo is best known for his *Chabkhas* (lashes), a particular kind of pada in which the evils or the persons considered to be embodiments of evil are, without malice, ruthlessly denounced. In his chabkhas, Bhojo has vehemently lashed at the hypocrisy of persons passing as men of God or leaders of society as well as at the evils prevalent in his days.

His chabkhas like those beginning with the lines "O my soul! adore the Creator. This world is but a dream"²⁶

22. પ્રથમ સદ્ગુણનો સત્સંગ સાચો,
બીજો જે કરો તે જાણો કાચો,
હરિનામ ભૂલ્યા એ જ પડ્યો છાંચો,
માટે તમે સદ્ગુણને નિશદિન જાચો,

એવું સમજ્યે આવે પાર, મઠે સાર, એક તાર;
મટે સાર, આધાર, નેતિ પાર, વિશ્વાધાર,

નામરહિત લેજો માની, માની કે તે જ જ્ઞાની.

23. ઘડે મર્યું પાણી રે, સૂરજ માંહે આવી પડ્યો;
ઘટાકાશ માસ્યું રે, માગ્યો તેની સાથે લડ્યો.
ઘડામાં મારો સૂરજ હતો તે માગી નાચ્યો અલ્યા મૂર!
ઘડો ગયો તેની ચિન્તા નથી માઈ (પણ) નાશી ગયો મારો સૂર.
એને ક્યાંહી देखું રે, જુક્તિએ શેમાં જડ્યો. ઘડે મર્યું.

24. In Gujarat, after the dead body of a Hindu is taken out for the cremation ground, women of the household and family form themselves into a circle and rhythmically beating their breasts, sing songs extolling the greatness and glory of the deceased. These songs are called *Rajiyas*.

25. કામ, ક્રોધ, લોભ, મોહ, મદ, મત્સર.

26. પ્રાણિયા ! મજી લેને કિરતાર, આતો સપનું છે સંસાર.

and

“Look at these Bavas of the world; they have assumed this garb to cheat and exploit the world”²⁷ are well-known.

Bhojo has also written *Selaiya-akhyana*, a fairly long poem that narrates the blood curdling test that God, under the disguise of an ‘aghor’²⁸ Sadhu, put to Sheth Sagalsha, his wife and their only son Chelaiyo; and the unswerving faith in God with which the family cheerfully stood the test and was ultimately rewarded. This *Selaiya-akhyana* and *Kachaba-Kachab-nun Bhajan* (the devotional song of a tortoise and his mate), by Bhojo, were extremely popular for many decades in Gujarat.

The story of Chelaiya has been a subject of several poems in mediaeval literature. Of these, the poem beginning with the line “Sheth Sagalsha serves the sadhus; the Baniya scrupulously observes his vow”²⁹ by Ratandas is very well-known.

Bhojo has also written some *Horis*, padas extolling the beauty of the spring and the joy it awakens in the heart. The Hori beginning with the lines:—“Please listen to my request, my immortal Lord! I am your slave for births on end”³⁰ is well-known.

Ranchhodji Diwan (1785-1841)

Ranchhodji Diwan was a man of many parts. He was a poet, a historian, a statesman, an administrator and a warrior. He was a Diwan (Chief minister) of Junagadh; and had himself taken part in several battles. His fame as a statesman and administrator had spread throughout Kathiawad. Even the British have admired his courage and statesmanship.

Ranchhodji knew Hindi and Persian languages, besides Sanskrit. He has written *Shiva Mahatmya* in Vraj Bhasha; and *Tarikh-e-Sorath* (which is translated into English) and *Rukat-e-Gunagun*, a collection of miscellaneous letters in Persian.

Ranchhodji was a worshipper of Shiva and Shakti. He has written *Shiva Gita* and given a free rendering in Gujarati of *Durga Saptashati*. But he is known more for his garbas. Of the mediaeval poets, Vallabh Mevada and Ranchhodji Diwan are the two poets whose garbas had captured the minds and hearts of Gujarati women.

27. जोई ह्यो जगतना बाबा, धर्यो भेख धूतीने खावा.

28. A type of Hindu recluses who live a filthy life.

29. शेठ सगळशा साधुने सेवे, वाणियो पाळे व्रत.

30. नाथ ! मोरी अरज सुणो अविनाशी !

हुं तो जनम जनम तारी दासी

Girdhar (1787-1852)

Girdhar has written *Tulsi Vivaha*, *Rajasuya Yajna*, *Ashvamedha*, *Gokul Lila*, *Krishna Lila*, *Radha Krishna-na Mahima* etc. But he is best known for his *Ramayana*, which is not a translation, nor an adaptation, but an original work based on incidents from different works like *Hanuman Natak*; *Agni Puran*, *Padma Puran*, and Tulsidas's *Ramayana*. It is written in simple language and was for years, devoutly read in almost every household in Gujarat.³¹

Of the other poets of this period, mention must be made of Raghunathdas, the poet of the beautiful garbi, "Odhavji please deliver this message to Shyama"³² and of Ravo Bhagat, an obscure poet, known for his immortal line, "Save, O mother! This sinking ship. Amba! Mother dear! please take it across the ocean".³³

31. Girdhar's devotion was staunch and steadfast. While on a pilgrimage of holy places in North India, he wanted to go to Shri Nathji, in Rajasthan. But one Rangillalji Maharaj, with whom Girdhar had set out on the pilgrimage, did not allow him to go. Thinking, therefore, constantly about Shri Nathji and with His name on his lips, Girdhar died during the pilgrimage.

32. ઓધવજી ! સંદેશો કહેજો શ્યામને.

33. બેડો બાઈ બુડતો તારો રે,
અંબે આઈ, પાર ઉતારો રે.

CHAPTER VII

18TH TO MID-19TH CENTURY

(1)

Svaminarayana sect and its literature

The literature of Svaminarayana Sect stands as a class by itself in the mediaeval period.

The founder of this sect was Ramanand, but it was his disciple Sahajanand Svami who contributed most to its spread among the masses.

Sahajanand Svami (1781-1830) was born at Chhapaiya near Ayodhya (Uttar Pradesh). He came to Gujarat in 1801. The condition of religion at that time was not very satisfactory. Brahmins had practically monopolized religion; and the Bhakti Sampradaya which had thrown its doors open to everyone, irrespective of one's caste, creed, sex, or status in society, had, because of its rituals and festivals etc., become a costly affair for most people. The backward class was thus left uncared for. And because of their poverty, ignorance and lack of adequate cultural background, quite a good many persons belonging to this class had turned to superstition and unhealthy and unwholesome modes of life. This was particularly so in villages.

Deeply touched at this, Sahajanand Svami adopted villages as his particular field of work and spread his doctrine there. He worked out a synthesis of all that was best in the various branches of Hinduism and through its tenets taught people to live a pure, holy, useful and devout life. The object of worship of this sect also was Krishna; but, unlike in Vaishnava temples, the method of worshipping Him was extremely simple and its discipline was very strict.

This sect came to be known as Uddhaya Sampradaya or Svaminarayana Sampradaya. Vadatal, Gadhada and Ahmedabad are three main centres of the sect. The followers of this sect are known as Satsangis (Companions of the Good and the True), in contradistinction to the Vaishnava Sampradaya or Pushti-Marga whose followers are called Vaishnavas.

The sadus (monks) of this sect have scrupulously to observe some very rigid rules of thought, speech and behaviour laid down by Sahajanand Svami or Svaminarayana. These rules as well as the rules laid down for the Satsangis (the laity) are given in the *Shikshapatri*. Because of the simplicity

and purity of thought and behaviour of their sadhus and their concern for the backward classes, this sect has made a very deep impact on a large section of manual labourers and on the lower strata of society. It is open to everyone, irrespective of any consideration. The sadhus and the laity, leading a simple, pure, honest and hardworking life, free from drugs, narcotics and self-indulgence won the confidence of the people and contributed greatly to the raising of the ethical level of the life of the people.

The Sampradaya has considered land, wealth, woman and life extremely sacred and prohibited debauchery, non-vegetarianism and alcoholic drinks. The rules laid down for the sadhus in relation to their association with women are very strict. This, however, does not mean that the sect considers woman inferior to man. As a matter of fact, the sect has considered woman sacred and introduced an element of respect and chastity in man's relation with her. The sect has also sanctioned remarriage for widows.¹

The sadhus of this sect came from the poor, illiterate and unsophisticated class of people. But the service they rendered to the people through their literature is remarkable. This literature is created by genuine men of God. Serene and sober instructions about Jnana, Vairagya, and Tyaga (renunciation) are a distinguishing feature of this literature. The sadhus of this sect have, no doubt, stressed the futility of worldly possessions and pleasures, but, unlike other poets of Vairagya, they have emphasised the greatness and importance of existence as a human being. When the physical body was as a rule considered to be transient and worthless and compared with an unbaked pot of earth, the poets of the Svaminarayana Sect realized and stressed that in spite of its transience, it was the physical frame that was of utmost importance. For, whatever spiritual progress it was possible for a man to make, it could only be made as long as the body was there. They, therefore, considered the body as real, not illusory; it was the only agency for the performance of duties both secular and spiritual.

Of the poets who were sadhus belonging to this sect, five are particularly noteworthy.

Muktanand (1761-1830)

Muktanand was a senior Guru-bandhu (disciple of the same Guru) of Sahajanand. He is said to have written about nine thousand padas of Jnana, Vairagya, and Shringara. Besides these, he has written works like *Odhav Gita*, *Sati Gita*, *Shikshapatri*,

1. According to contemporary custom and some ancient Hindu scriptures, it was not generally open for a widow to remarry,

Dharmamrita, *Prema Lila* and *Rama Lila*. He is also written *Mukund Bavani*, a collection of 52 padas written by Mukund or Mukunddas which was his name before he renounced the world and became a sadhu.² Muktanand is noted primarily for his poems of Jnana.

Brahmanand (1772-1849)

Brahmanand had systematically studied Charani³ prosody, and he knew three languages, Gujarati, Charani and Hindi.

He has written poetry in Gujarati under the name of Brahmanand; in Charani (a dialect spoken by Charans, a class of court-poets) under the name of Ladu;⁴ and in Hindi under the name of Shriranga. He is said to have written some eight thousand padas. His pada beginning with the line "One day when the moon shone bright",⁵ written in *Charchari Chhanda*⁶ and recited by Mavdanji, a satsangi poet, in the late twenties and early thirties has moved thousands of its listeners. Many of his padas like the one beginning with the line, "This physical charm is like a butterfly; it takes no time to slip away"⁷ were for decades on end favourite with lovers of Gujarati poetry. Besides the padas of Jnana and Vairagya, Brahmanand has written *Dan lila*, *Krishna Kirtan* and padas of Shringara. The forte of Brahmanand, however, is his poetry of moral instruction (Upadesh).

Premanand Svami (1779-1845)

Premanand Svami is better known as Premanand Sakhi or Prema

2. It is customary for Hindu sadhus and ascetics to adopt a new name after renunciation, perhaps, as a symbol of their total break with the past.
3. The metres used by Charan poets in their compositions. They are extremely suitable for recitation in public.
4. His name was Ladu Barot, before he renounced the world.
5. एक दिन शशि अति उजास.
6. Much of the beauty of the pada is due to the haunting music of words and the cadence of the metre; which is impossible to render into any other language.
7. आ तन रंग पतंग सरीखो जातां वार न लागे जी.

Sakhi (Female friend),⁸ as Sahajanand Svami addressed him.

Besides the padas of Jnana, Bhakti and Shringara, Prema-Sakhi has written some of the most moving padas of separation from Sahajanand Svami.⁹ The poet is said to have had a melodious voice and a fine talent for music. His listeners used to be moved to tears when he sang, "I bow to Sahajanand the *Rasa* incarnate, the incomparable Entity,"¹⁰ a pada depicting the emotions of a heart torn by the agony of separation.

Prema Sakhi has also written *Tulsi-Vivaha* and *Thal* (Banquet). In *Thal* he has described the various delicacies served at a sumptuous Gujarati banquet. This used to be sung for many years at many places in Gujarat on the occasion of a feast celebrating a marriage or some memorable event.

Nishkulanand (1766-1848)

Nishkulanand is said to have written three thousand padas, mainly of Tyaga and Vairagya. Some of his padas like the ones beginning with the lines "Long live the mother of Gopichand who breathed Vairagya into her son."¹¹ and Renunciation cannot last unless inspired by Vairagya"¹² were sung by travelling mendicants and strolling minstrels while begging in the streets.

Besides padas, Nishkulanand, has written *Bhakta-chintamani* and *Dhirajakhyana*. Nishkulanand is distinguished for his poems of Vairagya.

8. It is customary for Vaishnava bhaktas to consider themselves as females, the one and only male being Krishna. Miranbai is said to have gone to Vraja and sought an interview with Jiva Goswami, a distinguished Vaishnava Acharya. Miranbai was told that the Goswami did not grant interviews to females. Miranbai, thereupon, wrote a couplet and sent it to him, purporting to say: To this day I laboured under the impression that Krishna is the only male in Vraja. In spite of your staying at Vrindavana, you still continue to consider yourself a male! Well, bless your faculty of sound judgement.

આજ લગી હું એમ જાણતી' તી જે વ્રજમાં કૃષ્ણ પુરુષ છે એક;
વૃંદાવન વસી હજી-પુરુષ રહ્યા છો તેમાં ધન્ય તમારો ચિત્તેક.

The Goswami is said to have caught the point and told Miranbai in.

9. The followers of Svaminarayana sect consider Sahajanand Svami the Godhead; veritable Krishna. The Krishna of Prema-Sakhi, a Gopi, was Sahajanand.

10. વંદું સહજાનંદ રસરૂપ અનુપમ સારને રે લોલ.

11. જજની જીવો રે ગોપીચંદની પુત્રને પ્રેયો વૈરાગ્ય જી

12. ત્યાગ ન ટકે રે વૈરાગ્ય વિના

Devanand

Devanand has written many padas of Bhakti and Vairagya. Mendicants and itinerant beggars used to recite his padas while begging. His pada "Fasten your love fast to the Lord. One has to depart leaving everything here. At the time of death, one is all alone, friendless, companionless"¹³ was a rage in its days. Devanand has also written garbis and chabkhas. He was the guru of Dalpatram and thus served as a link between the old and the new.

(II)

Of the poets, not belonging to the Svami narayana Sect.

Ranchhod (alive in 1804)

Ranchhod is known for his *Ramayana*, *Radha Vivaha* and *Ranchhodji-no Garbo*, narrating how Ranchhodji—Krishna—, for the sake of an humble bhakta Bodana, left Dwarka and moved to Dakore. The Garbo is sung even today.

Ranchhod, however, is distinguished by his hymn to Annadeva, god in the form of Food. Several characters of Narasimha, Premanand and Samal have eulogized the handful of rice without which nothing—not even the Bhakti of God—is possible in this world. But Ranchhod is the only poet in mediaeval literature who has directly addressed a poem to Food, the God to whom everything else is subservient. It is significant to note that it is not a comic or humorous poem.

Here is a free rendering of the poem:—

I bow to you, you Anna Deva! My first obeisance to you! The children get up from their sleep, early in the morning and the first thing they ask for, crying and shouting, of their mother is something to eat. If one gets his food well in time, well, one feels well and strong. But if it takes some time to arrive, man feels weak and run down. He loses his temper while talking to others, loses his concentration in study, feels giddy and crippled. The Ekadashi¹⁴ comes only once a fortnight; and people observe it. But they dream of food in sleep that night and eagerly wait for the day to dawn. If he who calls himself the strongest of the strong, nay, the strongest of the strongest does not get you well in time, then he too drops down dull

13. कर प्रभुसंगाथे दूढ प्रीतडी रे,
मरी जावुं मेली घन माल,
अंतकाले सगुं नहि कोई नुं रे.

14. The eleventh day of every fortnight of the lunar month: a day of fast and prayer.

and depressed. You are the object of reverence of all the thirty three crores¹⁵ of gods.

Ranchhod Says: All man's activities are contingent upon you, my God O Food!¹⁶

(III)

Dayaram (1776-1852)

Dayaram is the last of the major poets of mediaeval Gujarati literature. More facts are known about his life than about the life of any other poet of the period, though his life, too, is not quite free from legends.

Dayaram was born in 1776 at Chandod on the bank of the river Narmada. When he was 10 years old, he lost his father Prabhuram, and two years later, his mother Mahalakshmi (Rajkor).

When Dayaram was 13 years of age, he happened to meet Ichchharam Bhattaji of Dakore. This meeting had such a powerful impact on the impressionable mind of Dayaram that he decided to remain free from the entanglements of the world and pass his life in the bhakti of his Lord, Shri Krishna.

He ran away from home when he learnt that his maternal uncle was making arrangements for his (Dayaram's) marriage. For full 12 years he travelled all over India, visiting every important place of pilgrimage.

He visited all these places of pilgrimage twice again. In all he had spent 25 years of his life in travels. This enabled him

15. One crore is equal to ten million.

16. તમને આરાધું અન્નદેવ ! પરથમ કરું તમારી સેવ.
સવાર પહોરે સૂતાં ઝૂટે, બકોર કરતાં બાઠ;
માતા પાસે લાવા માંગે પરથમ આતઃ કાઠ.
પહોર દહાડામાં આવી મળે તો કાયા કરે કલ્હોલ;
માણસ થાય છે મરવા જેવું ઘડી થાય જો સોઠ.
વાત કરતાં વઢી પડે છે, ભણતાં જાય છે મૂલી;
આંખઢીએ અંધારાં આવે, કાયા થઈ જાય લૂલી.
પંદર દિને એકાદશી આવે, વ્રતતર્ણો મહિમાય;
રાત પડે ને સપનું લાગે, વાહાણું વ્યારે વાય ?
બલિયામાં જે બલિયો કહાવે, જે છે સહુથી બલિયો;
તે જો પામે ત્રીજે પહોરે, ધૂલ થઈને ઢલિયો.
તેત્રીશ કોટિ દેવ મલીને સહુ કો તમને પૂજે;
કહે રણછોડ, અન્નદેવ મળે તો સર્વે વાતો સૂઝે.

(વૃદ્ધ કાવ્યદોહન, ગ્રંથ ૨, પૃ. ૭૬૨)

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to do many places, see all manner of life, and have some acquaintance with many languages of India. Dayaram has written poems in Gujarati, Hindi and Marathi.

When not on tour, Dayaram stayed either at Chanded or at Dabhoi, a small town nearby. He spent the last 17 years of his life at Dabhoi, where he died on February 9, 1852.

At the time of Dayaram's death, the British had already arrived. English schools had started; Gujarati newspapers, like *The Mumbai Samachar* and the *Jnana prasarak* and anglo-vernacular papers like the *Chabuk* had already started their publication. The Gujarat Vernacular society and the *Buddhi vardhak Sabha* had already started their activities; and the social, cultural and literary Gujarat was pulsating with new life.

But Dayaram, having been cast in another mould during the formative years of his life, remains totally unaffected by these upheavals. His death brings to an end the mediaeval period of Gujarati literature.

Like that of Premanand and Samal, the creative output of Dayaram too is considerable. Dayaram has written *Padas*,¹⁷ *Akhyanas*,¹⁸ *Mahina* (months),¹⁹ *Charitra Kavyas* (biographies),²⁰ *Dialogues*,²¹ *Garbas* and *Garbis*. Dayaram has also written *Rasik Vallabh*, *Sampradaya Sar*, *Rasik Ranjan* etc., poems elaborating the tenets of *Pushti Sampradaya*, and *Prabodha Bavani*, *Prashnottara Malika*, and *Bhakta Vel*, didactic poems or poems related to *Bhakti*. He has also written *Satasaiya* in Hindi. He has written some prose as well.

Rasik Vallabh is a long expository poem, enunciating and elucidating the principles of *Pushti-marga*. It is a key to Dayaram's philosophy that permeates his poetry.

Miran Charitra is a short, beautiful poem, narrating the miracles associated with *Miranbai's* life. Dayaram is the first writer in Gujarati to write on the life of *Miranbai*.

Dayaram, however, is best known for his *Garbis*, as *Narsimha Mehta* is known for his *Prabhatiyans*; *Akho*, for his *Chhappas*; *Vallabh*, for his *Garbas*; *Pritam*, for his *Padas*; *Dhiro*, for his *Kafis*, *Bapusaheb* for his *Rajiyas* and *Bhojo* for his *Chabkhas*.

17. *Bal Lila*; *Rupa Lila*; *Dan Lila*; *Prema rasa Gita*; *Prema Pariksha Vreha vilas* etc.

18. *Ajamilakhyana*; *Vaktrasura-akhyana*, etc.

19. *Rasiyaji-na Mahina*; *Bar Mas-rū Garbi*; *Vahalaji-na Mahina* etc.

20. *Miran charitra*; *Narasinha Mehtani Hundi*; etc.

21. *Hanuman Garuda Samvad*; *Manā Matī Samvad* etc.

as under:—Never henceforth shall I speak with the son of Nanda. O Friend! My irritation knows no bounds, since the moment he called me Shashvadani. The disc of the moon has a stigma on it, and Rahu (a demon who is said to wreak venence on the moon and cause an eclipse), swallows it every six months. The moon increases and decreases every alternative fortnight, and does not always shine fully. By calling me chandravadani, he has bracketed me with the moon.

In another poem *Rang-Vyatyaya* (Interchange of colours) Radha playfully asks Krishna to keep away and not to touch her, because "the colour of my skin would be black if I allowed you to touch me".²⁷ Krishna has an immediate and attractive solution to the problem: "In that case, embrace me once again. It will interchange the colours. Mine will return to me and yours to you."²⁸

These are some of the instances of Dayaram's playful wit, reminiscent of Sanskrit Subhashitas,²⁹ or of poets like Surdas of Vraj Bhasha or of the tradition of Gujarati bhakta poets like Narasimha Mehta and Miranbai; and the sweetness of diction observed in these and many other poems, is all Dayaram's own.

The opening lines of many of Dayaram's garbis are, as a rule, very catching. Innumerable garbis beginning with the lines like, "I may tell you something, if you halt for a while, my darling Bihari",³⁰ "How do I know what my dear found in me",³¹ "From this day on, never shall I go to anything that is black in colour",³² "Love can settle in the heart of only he who is born of love"³³ are among the best in Gujarati literature.

Of the noteworthy books of the period, mention must be made of the following:—

(1) *Vimal Prabandha* (C.1512) by Lavanyasamaya. It is a biography in nine cantos of Vimalsha, the minister of Bhimadeva I, and a great lover and patron of art. His temples on Mount Abu are masterpieces of sculptural art. The Prabandha has little historical value. Nor has it any remarkable literary merits. But it provides some valuable information about the state of the society then—about castes, professions, auspicious and inauspicious marks on the body of men and women, omens

27. कहानकुंवर काळा छो, अडतां हुं काळी थई जाउं.

28. फरी मळतां रंग अदलाबदली, मुज मोरो, तुज तोरो.

29. Pithy and often witty sayings in verse.

30. ऊमा रहो तो कहूं वातडी, बिहारीलाल !

31. हुं शुं जाणुं जे वहाले मुजमां शुं दीठुं ?

32. इयाम रंग समीपे न जावुं मारे आजथकी.

33. जे कोई प्रेमअंश अवतरे प्रेमरस तेना उरमां ठरे.

good and bad, astrology, warfare. arms and weapons etc. of those days.

(2) *Rupchanda Kunvar Rasa* (C.1581) by Nayasundar. This Rasa narrates the story of love between Rupchand, the son of a merchant of Ujjayini and Sohag, the daughter of Gunasen, who has come to live in Ujjayini. Sohag has decided not to marry. But at seventeen, she longs for a mate worthy of her beauty and brains. This she finds in Rupchand, he having solved her riddles, which even king Vikrama could not solve. Other measures having failed, Vikrama gives his daughter in marriage to Rupchand in order to find out from him how he solved the riddles of Sohag. The charm and devotion of the princess succeed in drawing out the secret from Rupchand. The princess communicates it to her father, who, in his turn, mightily pleased with the intelligence of Rupchand, celebrates the marriage of Rupchand and Sohag. The poet, being a Jain Sadhu, makes towards the end of the story, Vikrama embrace Jainism and Rupchand the hero renounce the world and enter orders.

This story is marked by ornate descriptions largely influenced by Sanskrit poetry. "It contains" as K. M. Munshi says, "a much larger element of local and foreign words, is more rhetorical than Bhalan's, and, at places, develops a music and elegance of its own."

(3) *Nala Damayanti Rasa* (1609) by Nayasundar. It is based on *Nalayana* (c.1220) a Sanskrit narrative poem by Manikyachandra. Nayasundar, who knew Sanskrit, Prakrit, Hindi, and Urdu well, has been able to bring in a fair measure of the charm and delicacy of Sanskrit poetry in his work.

CHAPTER VIII

PARALLEL CURRENTS

19th century is an important landmark in Gujarati literature. The arrival of the Britisher in India is as epoch-making an event as his departure in 1947. India had, for centuries, come in contact with people and nations practising different religions and coming from other countries. But the impact that the contact with the Britisher made on our civilization and on our attitude to life has hardly any parallel in the long and chequered history of India.

Though the Britisher had set his foot on the Indian soil in the 18th century, his power could be consolidated only in the 19th century.

There were three main rivals to the British Power in India: the French, Haider and Tipu Sultan, and the Marathas. Of these, the French had been knocked out in 1760 in the battle of Vandivas. Haider was defeated in 1781, and Tipu Sultan died in 1799. So, two of the most powerful rivals of the British were eliminated by the end of the 18th century, and the only surviving rival, the Maratha, was defeated in 1818. Thus, by the middle of the first half of the 19th century, the British became supreme and unrivalled. In 1826, Regular Schools were opened in Surat, Ahmedabad, Broach, Kaira, Dholka and Nadiad, which were staffed with men instructed in Bombay. 1840 saw the creation of the Native Board of Education which looked after the education of the Province. From 1855, English became the medium of Instruction. In 1852 Dayaram, the last great representative of the mediaeval period of Gujarati literature died. The year 1857 witnessed the two great events that changed the shape of things for India: One was the establishment of the Universities at Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, which slowly and imperceptibly changed the psycho-cultural tendencies of our college-going young men; and the other, was the "Sepoy Mutiny" which totally changed the political complexion of the country.

Thus by the first half of the 19th century, the British Power had struck its roots in India, and English language had opened for us the window to the world. Blind faith in conventional beliefs and customs started to be challenged by

rationalism and we became intolerant of many of our social evils like *Kanya-Vikraya* (selling of daughters for marriage), *Vara-Vikraya*, (selling of sons for marriage), physical or intellectual incompatibility in marriages, child marriages, child widowhood etc., which sapped up the vitality and energy of our nation. On account of our first and happy contact with the Western civilization through the British, a sense of this-worldliness also started to dawn upon us. And the centre of the thought of our idealist young men and sober and dispassionate thinkers shifted naturally to the field of social reform.

It was a period of universal restlessness, universal activities, an irrepressible urge to do something new and something that would change the face of the nation.

The first Printing Press in Western India, was started in Bombay towards the end of 1778 by Rustomji Kersaspji; and *Mumbai Samachar*, the first weekly newspaper in Bombay and the second in the whole of India, was published on the 1st July, 1822. It has continued to be published as a daily newspaper since 1840.

1831 saw the publication of *Chabuk*, edited by Naorojji Dorabji Chandaru, known as Naorojji Harkaru.

The Gujarat Vernacular Society started publishing *Varatman* (Vartaman), a weekly periodical at Ahmedabad, in 1849. It was popularly known as *Budhavariyun* as it was published every Budhavar (Wednesday). It was the first weekly newspaper published from Gujarat proper.

In Bombay, in 1849, was started another periodical, *Gane-an Parsarak* (Jnana-Prasaraka) and in 1851, Dadabhoy Naoroji started at Bombay, the *Rast Gofar* (the Speaker of Truth).

Apart from the publication of these periodicals, the pulsation of new life was felt in other spheres of the socio-political and cultural life of Gujarat as well. The Manava Dharma Sabha of Durgaram Mahetaji was established in 1844 at Surat. The Gujarat Vernacular Society was established in 1848 at Ahmedabad; and the Buddhivardhaka Sabha was established in 1851 at Bombay.

The "Varaliyo Rakshasa" (the steamy Giant—the Railway Engine) began to roar and roam over parts of the country; and annihilate distances which so far seemed infinite. The Post and Telegraph Services and the newspapers performed the miracle of bringing us the news from countries far and wide in appreciably short time. Political unrest came to an end, and people felt amazed at the metamorphosis that had taken place. The *Buddhi-Prakasha*, a periodical published by the Gujarat

Vernacular Society, used to print a picture of a railway train and wrote under it:

Equip yourselves with reform: No digressions please. Look at this Railway Train—a product of the Reform.'

Or, it would print a picture of a water-pipe and write under it:

Blood circulates in the body: Atmospheric pressures exert themselves everywhere. If you feel surprised at it well, look at this tap of water.'

On the other hand, the Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Society and the Shreyah Sadhaka Adhikari Varga served as measures to counter the materialistic approach towards life, that was getting powerful in those days.

Under these circumstances, the first half of the 19th century Gujarati literature sees two currents running parallel to each other: One, of the continuity of the old traditions; and the other, of the sure and unmistakable stirrings of the new thoughts and ideology. Along with the poetry written under the influences which the new age brought in its wake, poetry of the old type in its old traditional forms continues to be written and enjoyed during this period; and it is in no way inferior to the new current in its quantitative output or in the number of its readers.

In the latter half of the 19th century also, the old and the new currents do seem to run parallel to each other. But the traditional themes of *Jnana* and *Vairagya* and narration of Puranic episodes gradually move to the field of prose; and cease to be depicted in poetry. Only *Bhakti* seems to be holding to its own. But writers like Rishiraj, Tribhuvan Premshankar and Sagar, who wrote largely on *Bhakti*, do show some traces of modernity in their style.

Social evils, rooted in the ageold customs and manners, which started drawing the attention of the Gujarati writer in the first half of the 19th century continue to draw increasing attention of the writers also in the latter half of the century and poetry, both in its form and content clearly drifts away from its immediate predecessor, the poetry of the mediaeval period.

1. સજો રે સુધારો, તજો વાત આઢી,
સુધારાથી થૈ આ જુઓ આગાઢી.
2. શરીરમાં શોણિત સંચરે છે,
વાયુ દબાણો સઘલે ફરે છે;
એ વાતથી જો ઉપજે અચંબો,
જુઓ જુઓ આ જલયંત્ર બંબો.

Towards the closing years of the 19th century, by about 1885, the break with the past is complete and total, when university graduates and the writers influenced by them emerge on the literary scene. Unlike writers like Navalram, Bholanath, Nathuram Sundarji and others who preceded them, these writers, headed by Narasimharao Divatia do not show any appreciable influence of Dalpatram or Narmad on their poetry, at any stage. Their poetry is written under the distinct influence of Sanskrit, English, Persian and folk-lore.

The prose of the university graduates and of the writers influenced by them also differs in style and content from the prose of the writers of the Narmad-Dalpat period.

The place of Sanskrit in university curriculum, the establishment in 1885 of the Indian National Congress, movements for Local Self Government and many other movements contributed to the cultural and political awakening of the country and they inspired the intelligentsia to assess the relative merits and demerits of the Western and the Indian Civilizations.

In Gujarat, Govardhanram and almost all other writers of the period felt convinced that India's contact with the West was providential; and that it was in the larger interest of India to cooperate with the British. Because of the socio-political conditions obtaining in the country, ambitious and talented young men from villages were attracted towards cities, preferably in British India,³ where maximum freedom was found. As a result, the age-old joint family system began to disintegrate, which, in its own turn, resulted in the slackening of the hold of the family, caste and community on the individual. It no longer remained possible to continue to live as people had lived for centuries on end. The interest of our thinkers was, therefore, concentrated on the thought: How best to live with peace within and peace without in the new age that had settled irrevocably?

In their search for new dimensions of relations between individual and society, our thinkers like Govardhanram realized that life could best be lived in the changed circumstances if a synthesis of whatever is best in the traditions of the East as well as in those of the West were worked out. This synthesis should not be a mechanical amalgamation of a few elements of this and a few elements of the other civilization. We are a nation

3. India was divided into three Presidencies: Bombay, Bengal and Madras: Each of these Presidencies had some parts that were ruled directly by the British Indian Government; and some, that were ruled by Native Princes. The former were called British India; the latter, Native States.

of the East; and the civilization of the East is in our blood for centuries. If we cast a way from our civilization all that is dead weight and accept from the West only that which our system could assimilate, then only would the synthesis be proper.

Like the social reformers of the Narmad-Dalpat period, these thinkers too traced the root of all our ills to our mal-adjusted married life. But while the social reformers of the Narmad-Dalpat period prescribed symptomatic treatment like abolition of child marriages or permission to widows of certain categories to remarry under certain conditions, thinkers of the post-1885 period like Govardhanram delved deeper into the problem and diagnosed that mal-adjustment in our married life was due to marriages being arranged by parents who took every other consideration like wealth, social status, nobility of the family of the bride or the bridegroom etc., into account and ignored the only consideration that was worth its while, that is, love between the boy and the girl. This, they thought, resulted in the physical or the intellectual or the emotional mal-adjustment of the parties. It did not allow the lives not only of the man and wife but also of whole families fully to blossom into peace and happiness. They, therefore, prescribed two remedies: (1) Love-marriage, of course, with ample provisions to ensure that the love was sincere, genuine and strong; and (2) Education for the girl,⁴ so that she might be able to shoulder her responsibilities as a physical, intellectual and emotional complement to man.

Love as a pole-star of life and a chivalrous attitude towards woman, thus, constitute the basis of literature of the post-1885 period or the Pandit Yuga as we shall call it. There is, of course, some difference between the approach towards woman of conservatives like Govardhanram and of radicals like Ramanbhai and Narsimharao; but that is only a difference of degree.

4. Boys had already started going to schools and colleges.

CHAPTER IX

MID-19TH TO EARLY 20TH CENTURY

(1)

NARMAD—DALPAT PERIOD (1850-1885)

Dalpatram (1820-1898)

The two great leaders of modern literature were Dalpatram and Narmadashankar. Both of them participated in their own particular ways in the movement of social reform of their days; and made their respective contributions to the literary activities of the period.

Dalpatram Dahyabhai Travadi was born in 1820 in Wadhawan in Kathiawad (the present day Saurashtra). He had his education at a Primary School; and had studied *Pingal* (prosody) and *Alamkara Shastra* (figures of speech) from Devanand Svami of the Svaminarayana Sect. Dalpatram did not know English; but his knowledge of Vraj Bhasha and Sanskrit was fair. He felt interested in writing poetry from his young age.

In 1848, Sir Alexandar Kinloch Forbes,¹ needed a

1. A. K. Forbes (1821-1865) A Scotsman born in London, appointed in the Civil Service of the East India Company, landed in Bombay in 1843. He went to Ahmedabad (Gujarat) as an Assistant Judge in 1846. He was greatly interested in the old archeological and historical remains of Gujarat. He wrote in English *Rasa Mala*, one of the important source books for the history of old and mediaeval Gujarat. He founded the Gujarat Vernacular Society (the present day Gujarat Vidya Sabha) at Ahmedabad, in 1845, with a view to collect and preserve old Gujarati manuscripts, to take steps to translate into Gujarati, books from English and other languages and to promote production of original works. Inspired by profound and genuine sympathy for the people with whom his lot was temporarily cast, he worked assiduously for the development of Gujarati literature. Later when he was transferred to Surat, he founded there Surat Atthavisi Society and got it to publish a journal, *Surat Samachar*. When he went to Bombay as a Judge of the High Court, his name was associated with a Society called the Forbes Gujarati Sabha founded in 1865. Sir Alexandar was a Vice-Chancellor of the Bombay University in 1861. He died at Poona in 1865.

man who could collect for him information about Gujarat. He, therefore, at the recommendation of Bholanath Sarabhai (father of the distinguished man of letters Narasimharao Divatia), employed Dalpatram in his service. He was so favourably impressed in his very first interview by Dalpatram's equipment that he addressed him (Dalpatram) as "Kavishvara" (the greatest poet). Mr. Forbes played a decisive role in the life of Dalpatram. When he went to England in 1854, he got Dalpatram appointed in the Revenue Department at Sadra. But, at the request of Mr. Curtis, the new Secretary of the Gujarat Vernacular Society, Forbes wrote to Dalpatram in 1855 to accept the post of Assistant Secretary of the Society. In deference to the wishes of his patron and friend Forbes, Dalpatram gave up Government service and joined the Society. This, in its turn, changed the course of Dalpatram's life and offered ample scope to his wit, wisdom and public relations.

Dalpatram worked till 1878 as the Assistant Secretary of the Society and ably edited *Buddh Prakasha*, a periodical published by the Society since 15th May 1850.

Towards the closing years of his life, Dalpatram lost his eyesight. Yet his writing of poetry continued uninterrupted. He died in 1898 at the age of 78 years, a famous man, respected by princes and people alike, and created a C.I.E. (Companion of the Indian Empire) by Queen Victoria.

Dalpatram has, for the most part, written poetry. He has also written dramas and instructive essays.

His poetic compositions include, among others, *Vijaya-Kshama*, *Hamsa-Kavya-Shataka*, *Hunnarkhan-ni Chadai*, *Gamar-Bavani*, *Ritu-Varnana*, *Sampa-Lakshmi Samvad*, *Jadavasthali*, *Vena-Charitra*, *Forbes-Vilas* and *Forbes-Viraha*. He has moreover written garbis, marriage-songs and hundreds of short poems on miscellaneous subjects. He has written two plays: *Lakshmi-Natak* and *Mithyabhimana Natak*. In prose he has written three books: *Bhootanibandha*, *Jnatinibandha* and *Balavivahanibandha*. He has also written two books in Vraj Bhasha: *Jnana-Chatur* and *Vraja-Chatur*; and one in Hindi: *Shravanakhyana*.

Of these, *Hunnarkhan-ni Chadai* (1851) is an allegory on the disappearance of Indian crafts and industries under the onslaught of goods from foreign countries. In this allegory, the poet has described Hunnar (Industry) as the king; Yantrakhan (machinery) as his minister, Madarpat (a particular kind of cloth) as the Commander-in-chief and innumerable miscellaneous things, big and small, imported from foreign countries like China,

England etc. into India as the army. The incidents of battles in particular are well narrated. The poem, because of the novelty of its way of putting things, was popular in those days; and because of the nature of its contents, a subject of some ferment.

Vena Charitra (1868) is an akhyana, with appropriate divisions into kadavan and in metres used by mediaeval akhyana poets. The subject of the poem is widow remarriage. Vena, a young prince, on his way back to his capital from a social visit, comes across Kamala, a young woman, preparing to burn herself on a funeral pyre. On inquiry he learns that Kamala was a widow since her childhood and that self-immolation was her only way out from the misery that was her life. Vena persuades her to give up her idea of self-immolation, takes her with him to his capital and convincing her that remarriage for a widow was sanctioned by Parashara—A distinguished Hindu Law-giver—in his Smriti,² finds out an eligible bachelor from Kamala's caste and unites them in wedlock.

The poem has no special literary merit; but in an atmosphere surcharged with battle cries of crusade against social evils, this akhyana was a roaring success and people called it "the Purana of Social Reform". Man-bhattas are said to have recited it in public as they did the other akhyanas. Though the poem suffers from some inherent flaws and some artificiality of sentiments, pathos and humour are well depicted.

Forbes Viraha (elegy on the death of Forbes) (1865) is the best among Dalpatram's longer narrative poems. It is the first elegy in Gujarati literature. Sir Alexander Kinloch Forbes was a great patron of Dalpatram; and but for him Dalpatram would not have been what he rose to be. This association grew into close personal friendship based on mutual respect and consideration. Forbes' death at the age of 44 years came to Dalpatram as a severe blow.

Forbes Viraha embodies Dalpatram's great admiration for the great qualities of Forbes, the sincere gratefulness for all that Forbes had done for him and been to him, and the great personal loss and the void in life which the poet felt on his death. In spite of the jugglery of words so characteristic of Dalpatram at places, this is a good poem.

Besides full-length works, Dalpatram has written hundreds of short poems like Garbis, Padas, Muktakas (epigrammatic couplets or stanzas of four lines) and Chhappas. In these poems, the poet has used various kinds of deshis and old metres. Dalpatram had made a deep study of Pingal (prosody) Rasa

2. Compilation of traditional laws for Hindus.

and Alamkaras (figures of speech). His mastery over all kinds of metres was perfect. He has used every conceivable metre in his poetry. And words come easily to him. Because of this equipment, the formal side of Dalpatram's poetry is flawless.

The variety of subjects on which Dalpatram has written is also remarkable. It comprises description of places and exhibitions and treatment of subjects ranging from social reform to the history of institutions.

With his native intelligence, familiarity with Sanskrit and Vraj Bhasha, mediaeval Gujarati literature and folk-lore, extensive travel and sound experience of the world, Dalpatram was never short of subjects on which to write. There is hardly a subject of any social, political or other interest in his days on which he has not written. Because of his command over language and constant practice of versification, he could compose well, compose with ease and compose, very often, impromptu on any given subject. In order to keep pace with his junior contemporary and rival Narmad, he also wrote on patriotism and nature, subjects which were new in his days and on which Narmad wrote with some distinction.

Thus there is enough variety of metres, forms and subjects in Dalpatram's poetry. Internal rhymes, terminal rhymes, alliterations, puns and other figures of speech constitute one of Dalpatram's characteristics. His second characteristics is *Upadesh* (moral instructions). Almost all his poems are didactic. He firmly believed that the function of poetry was to entertain and enlighten the reader. He has, therefore, tendered even practical advice in his poetry either directly or indirectly through instances, illustrations, anecdotes and satires. His poems like *Adaplo Jivo* (Jivo, the naughty), *Makhi-nun Bachchun* (the young one of a fly), *Gandu Raja* (the idiot king), *Bholo Kanbi* (the gullible farmer), *Sharanaivalo* (the Sahnai-player), *Bholo Bhabho* (the gullible old man), *Nameli Doshi* (the bent-down old woman), *Oont Kahe* (the camel says) etc. belong to this group to poems.

Utmost simplicity of diction and style is the most noteworthy feature of Dalpatram's poetry. There is nothing ambiguous or complex in it, and it provides, healthy entertainment to the masses. Dalpatram, having a high sense of social responsibility, writes always with an eye on his readers and nothing that would debase or vulgarize their taste ever escapes his pen. He believed that poetry ought to be such as a father and his grown up daughter could, without embarrassment, read together. Because of the inherent limitations of his genius, his poetry fails to scale great heights. Yet, it abounds in worldly wisdom and cleverness.

His credo was to quietly and dispassionately observe the ways of the world and draw moral from everything that happens.

Dalpatram was a true votary of poetry. For about 55 years—from 1845 when he wrote one of his first poems *Bapa-ni Pipar* to 1898, when he died—his writing of poetry remained uninterrupted. He provided a link between the mediaeval and modern periods of Gujarati poetry.

Narmad (1833-1886)

Narmadashankar Lalshankar Dave or Narmad, as he is popularly called, was younger by 13 years to Dalpatram, who welcomed the new age that was dawning upon India. Yet, it is Narmad who is rightly acknowledged as the “Arun” (harbinger of the Dawn) of the new age, as he, by his literary activities, opened many new and diverse directions for poetry and prose, both creative and discursive in Gujarat.

Narmad was born in 1833 at Surat. He had his primary education in Surat; and secondary education in the Elphinstone Institution (founded in 1827), Bombay.³ His wife having reached the age of puberty, he had to leave his study at Bombay and return to Surat, where at the instance of his father-in-law, he took up a modest job of a school-teacher. His wife having died, he went back to Bombay, where he continued his study and started taking part in the movement of social reform of which Bombay was the centre. He became one of the founders of the Buddhivardhak Sabha (1851), and read there his first written lecture *Mandali Malava-thi Thata Labh Vishe* (On the advantages of meeting in a group).

Thus began his literary activity as a means to social reform. While studying in the college, he suddenly happened to write a poem in imitation of a Kafi of Dhiro; and experienced indescribable joy at writing it. He, therefore, decided to take up writing as his main profession—“a handful of jowar (a kind of coarse grain) will come somehow”. Since then he applied his mind closely to it. In the meantime, he left college and became once again a teacher in a Bombay school. But soon,

3. This Institute bifurcated in 1856 into the Elphinstone High School and the Elphinstone College. Prof. Reid of this Institution impressed upon his students that their duty after getting themselves educated was the education of the uneducated and the improvement of their society. Many alumni of this Institution, like Dadabhai Naoroji, Naoroji Fardunji, Mohanlal Ranchhoddas Jhaveri, Mahipatram Rooparam, Karsandas Mulji etc. made their mark in various spheres of the nation's life.

being fed up with the disquieting atmosphere there, which he thought would leave him no energy and peace of mind necessary for his literary pursuits, he resigned his post, and returning home looked with tearful eyes at his pen and said to it: "From this day on, I surrender myself to thee"⁴. Narmad had to fight long and hard against innumerable odds to stick to his resolve. After full 24 years of struggle, he had to give in.

Narmad was a representative of our age of transition. His study was neither deep nor systematic; and his judgment was often swayed by his impulses. But his enthusiasm for something new and something different was uncontrollable. Driven by this enthusiasm he, like many young people of his days, was attracted to Western civilization, and swore by it. But being a man of great courage of conviction and moral strength, when, after many disappointments and failures, he realized that man, however mighty he may be, is but a tool in the hands of some unknown, mysterious Power, and that the condition or tradition of a country can be changed only when the time ripens after long apprenticeship and preparation, he, caring little for his personal popularity which was unique, exhorted his friends and followers: "Retreat, brothers, we have committed a mistake." And he returned to the old orthodox Hindu way of life. This recantation of his, somehow, fails to register itself in his poetry.

Narmad strove to bring into Gujarati everything that fascinated him at English literature. He wrote subjective poems of nature, heroism, patriotism, and love. He tried to write an epic *Virasimha*, and on finding the existing metres inadequate for rendering the majesty of the theme which the blank verse in English could do, he suitably modified an existing metre and named it *Vira Vritta*. He also used another metre---*Rola*---in run-on lines, doing away with its caesura at the end of every line.

In prose also, Narmad was a pioneer in many fields. Not that there was no Gujarati prose before Narmad. As Muni Jinavijayji has said, much prose of good quality was written in the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries.⁵ Even in the 17th and 18th centuries we do come across some prose. Before Narmad was born, Printing Presses had arrived and newspapers and books in Gujarati prose had come out.⁶ Yet Narmad was the first among the writers of modern prose, who used it not as a mere

4. आजयी हुं तारे खोले छउं.

5. Please see page 9

6. 'Mumbai Samachar' the first Gujarati newspaper, which is still published, started its publication on 1, July 1822.

vehicle of communication, but as a medium capable of being turned out into a thing of beauty.

In prose, Narmad wrote essays,⁷ biographies,⁸ copious autobiographical notes,⁹ history,¹⁰ dialogues and dramas¹¹, letters, editorials¹² and literary criticism. In prose he has discussed some fundamentals of religion,¹³ prosody¹⁴, figures of speech¹⁵ and poetics.¹⁶ Single-handedly he prepared a dictionary of Gujarati language.¹⁷ which took him nine years of hard work (1860-1868) and he prepared, also single-handedly a dictionary of puranic tales,¹⁸ (1875). He is recognised as the father of modern poetry and modern prose because almost all the characteristics of modern poetry and modern prose¹⁹ are, for the first time, seen in ample measure in his poetry and prose.

Narma Gadya, *Narma Kavita*, *Narma Kosha*, *Rajyaranga*, *Mari Hakikat* and *Dharmavichara* are the main works of Narmad. All poems written by Narmad are collected in *Narma Kavita* and all prose writings in *Narma Gadya*.

Since his college days, Narmad had made writing of poetry his mission of life; and had solemnly decided to live by his pen. But the transformation that came over him in 1865-66, as a result of a wide and deep study of history which, as he says, he had to undergo for the purpose of writing his *Rajyaranga* (a History of the World), made him revise and sometimes disown the thoughts of his early years; and his zest for writing poetry also suffered. Most of his poems were written during the years 1855 to 1865-66. But in the course of about 20 years following his recantation he wrote very little poetry.

Yet his total poetic output is considerable. In rivalry of Dalpatram, Narmad wrote on any subject he could lay his hand

7. *Narma-Gadya*...

8. *Narsimha; Dayaram (Kavichantras)*.

9. *Mari-Hakikat* and *Uttar Narmad Charitra*.

10. *Rajyaranga; Surat-ni Mukhtesar Hakikat; Mevad-ni Mukhtesar Hakikat*.

11. *Rama-Janaki-Darshan; Krishna-Kumari; Sita-Haran; Shri Sara-Shakuntala; Shri Balakrishna-Vijaya; Droupad-Darshan*.

12. As an editor of *Dandiyo*.

13. *Dharma-Vichara*.

14. *Pingal-Pravesh*.

15. *Alamkara-Pravesh*.

16. *Rasa-Pravesh*.

17. *Narma-Kosha* or *Gujarati Shabdārtha Samgraha*, published in 1873.

18. *Narma-Katha-Kosha*.

19. That is poetry and prose of post-1850 period.

on; and in writing poetry, he aimed more at quantity rather than at quality. He had, of course, tried hard to understand the nature of poetry and from the very beginning considered *Rasa* of greater importance than figures of speech and metrical skill. He also knew the difference between good poetry and bad. It cannot, therefore, be said that he was ignorant of the nature and art of poetry. But his false notion about inspiration,²⁰ his vanity,²¹ and to some extent the morbidity of his nature have done an incalculable harm to his poetic talent which even at its best was not of a very high order.

Narmad has written scores of miscellaneous padas of jnana, bhakti and vairagya in the style of mediaeval poets. He has also written longer narrative poems like *Gopi Gita* and *Rukmini Haran* in the same style.

But it is in his poems of the modern style that he excels. Not only is he the first poet to underscore with love and legitimate pride the individuality of Gujarat in his "Victory to Thee, Thou noble Gujarat" and other poems on Gujarat, he is the first subjective poet of Gujarat. He has unreservedly expressed his emotions, feelings, thoughts and inner conflicts in his poems. His poetry bears a clear imprint of his personality, his true self.

In this type of poetry, Narmad has written about social reform, freedom, nature, love etc. He has written three longer poems. *Virasimha*, *Rudan Rasik* and *Hinduo-ni Padati* (the Decline of the Hindus). Of these, *Virasimha* and *Rudan Rasik* are left incomplete.

Narmad has written *Hinduo-ni Padati* in run-on lines of a single metre named *Rola*. It runs into 1500 lines. Narmad himself had described that poem as the "Bible of the Social Reformer". It is an allegorical poem intended to be an epic. In this poem a king named Sudharaditya (Reform) goes to war against Vahem yavan (Superstition) and Narmad is his Commander-in-chief. Narmad has put to use in this poem whatever he had gathered from his study of religion and history. The poem gives a vivid picture of the days when India was at the zenith of her glory and traces her decline to conditions of conservatism, superstitions, short-sightedness, casteism and social inequality. His delineation of the *Vira* (the heroic) and the *Karuna* (the pathetic) Rasas is, on the whole, admirable. He

20. He believed that inspiration could be summoned at will, by a kick from drugs.

21. He believed himself to be a great poet, almost a prophet.

concludes the poem on a note of optimism. This poem was considered by some to be superior in literary merits to the *Vena-Charitra* of Dalpatram.

It is pertinent to note that Narmad's India is exclusively a Hindu India. He, therefore, extols the glory of the Hindu as the glory of India, and holds the flaws in the character of the Hindus and their socio-economic inequities responsible for the decline and degeneration of India.

Narmad's contribution to Gujarati prose is superior to his contribution to poetry. In prose, too, he has written on a variety of subjects. *Narmad Gadya* is a collection of his essays and articles. *Rajyaranga* is a history of the rise and fall of all major States and Civilizations of the world. *Mari Hakikat* (Facts about myself) along with the *Uttar Narmad Charitra* are copious autobiographical notes containing, among other things, a good pen picture of Lalshankar, the poet's father. *Dharma Vichara* is a collection of articles he wrote after his recantation. Much of the prose of these books is well written and could be read even today with interest.

Dalpatram and Narmad

Dalpatram and Narmad are the two important poets of our age of social reform.

Narmad, with the enthusiasm of a crusader launched his movement of social reform with the battle cry:

Determined to do or die,
Jump, jump in the fray,
Success is there round the corner.²²

And Dalpatram admonished his readers to wait and watch and assimilate the essence of reform, in sober, gradual measures. He says:

“Gentlemen, preach the essence of gradual reform. If you put a whole laddu (a sweetmeat ball) on a swarm of ants, they would be crushed to death; but if it is broken up and strewn before them in powder-form they would eat and enjoy it.”²³

This reflects the difference between the natures of the two. Narmad was impatient, Dalpatram was patient. The driving force of Narmad was ardour and enthusiasm; that of Dalpatram was cool calculation. The forte of Narmad's poetry is emotion; that of Dalpatram, common sense and craftsmanship.

22. 'याहोम' करीने पडो, फतेह छे आगे.

23. सज्जन, संभळावजो रे, धीरे धीरे सुधारानो सार—
लाखो कीडी पर लाडवो आखो मेलिये तो मरी जाय :
भूको करी भभरावीए तो ते खासी रीतेथी खाय,—सज्जन०

Dalpatram had one thing which Narmad lacked—a sense of humour. Dalpatram could laugh at himself, as he did when he lost a good deal of money he had invested in stocks and shares and the share market crashed in 1865.

With a pun, so characteristic of Dalpatram, on the word “Sher” (meaning in Gujarati (1) a lion; and (2) a stock;) he wrote to the effect:

The hunter went to hunt a sher,
But the tables turned
And the Sher hunted the hunter.²⁴

Not many other poets in Gujarat have given as many poems of wit, humour and satire as Dalpatram has given.

Both Narmad, an enthusiast and a dreamer, and Dalpatram, a man of practical wisdom and sound commonsense, welcomed the dawn of the new age. Both saw that the country would have to adjust itself to the world that had changed and was changing rapidly if it was to survive; and both sang of man's duty towards the country, the society and himself. Both denounced social evils like child marriages, physically incompatible marriages, man's marriage at an old and infirm age, feasts arranged on certain days of death of a person, etc. Both admonished their readers to give up disunity, idleness, back-biting and superstitions like belief in ghosts, witches, black art etc. Both emphasised the importance of commerce and industry. Both wrote mostly on identical subjects and expressed mostly identical views, with the only difference that Narmad's views were often more radical and were expressed with greater ardour, while those of Dalpatram were more practical; and Narmad lacked the richness of vocabulary, polish of expression and metrical perfection that Dalpatram had in abundance.

Dalpatram too, has written some prose: but the contribution of Narmad in this field is by far the greater. Attempts have been made to compare Dalpatram and Narmad. In one such attempt Navalram had adjudged Narmad to be a greater and better poet than Dalpatram. But, after some years, he revised his judgement and concluded that both were unique. In 1933, when the first birth centenary of Narmad was celebrated at several places in Gujarat, Narmad was naturally overplayed. Vishvanath Bhatt, to whom was assigned the task of writing a short biography of Narmad and of selecting and editing one collection of his pieces in prose and another collection of his pieces in verse, gave an excellent account of himself. But his

24. गया शिकारे शेरने शिकारना करनार;
त्यां सामो शेर कयों शिकारीनो शिकार.

was an approach of an ardent admirer paying tribute to his hero. It could hardly have been otherwise, taking into account the special occasion for which Vishvanath was commissioned to write. But it unintentionally and unconsciously led lesser men, who had not read their Narmad and Dalpat again, to play down Dalpatram.

A few years later, Mr. J. E. Sanjana, a high brow scholar of note, disgusted with the euphoria that had set in, went through the works of both the poets and said, "If I have spoken in superlatives of Dalpatram as a man and poet, it is because I honestly believe that he deserves them, and also because I deeply feel the injustice Gujarat, to its own detriment, has been doing to this prince among Gujarat's poets who has been dethroned for no real fault of his. Princes of this world can be dethroned for good; many lose their thrones never to gain them again. But you cannot dethrone for ever a real prince among poets, he is bound to come into his own, sooner or later. For time is always on his side, and he can wait, almost indefinitely. Dalpat, too, will surely come into his own; if not to-day, twenty years hence,—if not then, fifty years hence. For any list of the best six Gujarati poets of the last six hundred years must include his name, which again must stand very high in the list."²⁵

One cannot of course agree in toto with these views of Sanjana; but one cannot but feel that Dalpatram has, for inexplicable reasons, been downgraded much out of proportion, as Narmad has been glorified much beyond his worth.

Bholanath Sarabhai (1823-1886)

Bholanath, one of the founders of the Prarthana Samaj (1871), is distinguished for his *Ishwara Prarthana Mala* which marks a distinct change of the devotee's attitude towards God.

The devotee of the mediaeval period worshipped his personal God and prayed to Him for personal favours and solutions of his worldly problems. The Prarthana Samaj similar in its creed to the Brahmo Samaj of Calcutta with the only difference that the Prarthana Samaj did not, in its early stages, subscribe to the idea of the abolition of caste, believed in *Nirakara* (formless) Ishvara, who like the *Sakara* (one having a form) Ishvara of the devotee of the mediaeval period, is omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent. But unlike the mediaeval devotee, the Prarthana Samajist believes in One God, who is the Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer of the universe, and who is distinct from the things created. There is no other God but Him.

25. *Studies in Gujarati Literature*, Published by the University of Bombay 1950, pp.151.

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The Prarthana Samajist, like the mediaeval devotee, believes in the efficacy of prayer, but he does not believe in any other external form of worship. Nor does he believe in prayer for mundane favours. He approaches God as a child would approach his parent (not a lover or a beloved) and in utmost humility beg Him to lead him from *Asat* (Untruth) to *Sat* (Truth), from *Tamas* (Darkness) to *Jyoti* (light), from *Mrityu* (Death) to *Amrita* (Life Eternal); and grant him strength of *Sadacharana* (Good conduct), for the faith in the One, Pure and Holy God together with righteous conduct is the leading principle of *Bhakti*, which pleases God and helps the devotee's soul here and hereafter.

Bholanath's *Ishvara-Prarthana Mala* is a testament of Bhakti of this type. Its two volumes consist of 30 *Ankas* (sections), of which 28 were written by Bholanath after which he died and the last two *Ankas* were composed by his son Narasimharao. Each *Anka* is intended to serve for each day of the month.

Every section of the *Ishvara Prarthana Mala* contains a few padas, which can be set to music, one prayer in prose which can favourably be compared with the prose of any other writer of the period, and an "Arati" with which to wind up the session. The Arati is in the abhanga and the dindi metres, perhaps in imitation of the Arati of the Prarthana Samaj of Bombay.

As summed up in *Further Milestones in Gujarati Literature*, "The prosepassage in each section is couched in reverent language beseeching the Creator in very humble and feeling words to forget his weakness and grant strength to the devout and poor human being, to enable him to always keep Him and His behests in mind and behave accordingly. He prays to be given 'સદાચરણ બલ', the strength of virtuous conduct — — — — — Faith in God, in His divine mercy, the lowliness of the human being and his weakness, these supply him with his theme."

Bhakti is the one and only theme of Bholanath's poetry.

The nature of his approach to God would not permit the fire and passion of a Narasimha, a Miran or a Dayaram in Bholanath's poetry. But Bholanath has certainly the heart of a bhakta, and his poetry is as much marked by transparent sincerity as the poetry of any *Bhakta-Kavi* of the mediaeval period. Refinement of thought and diction distinguishes it from the devotional poetry of his contemporaries, Dalpatram and Narmad.

The whole of the *Ishvara Prarthana Mala* has been translated into Hindi. Some of its poems have been translated into Bengali also.

Mahipatram Nilkanth (1829-1891)

Mahipatram Rooparam Nilkanth was born in Surat. He was a social reformer and a Government Officer in the Education Department. He has written a social novel *Sasu Vahu-ni Ladai* and two historical novels *Vanraj Chavdo* and *Sadhara Jesang* (Siddharaj Jayasimha). He has moreover written biographies of Karsandas Mulji and Parvatikunvar, his wife; and a travelogue, *England-ni Musafarinun Varnan* (the Description of (my) Travel to England), which is the first Gujarati travelogue, describing the life of the British people and their society. Mahipatram has also made a collection of old Bhavais, *Bhavai-Sangraha*.

Of these *Sasu vahu-ni Ladai* (The quarrel between a mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law) (1866) is the first social novel in Gujarati. In fact, it is the first novel, in as much as it was written earlier than *Karan Ghelo*. But the latter, in spite of all its limitations, being a better representative of the *genre*, is customarily recognised as the first novel in Gujarati.

Sasu Vahu-ni Ladai depicts in humorous language the domestic life of an average middle class family of Gujarat, bringing out the autocracy and tyranny of the malicious mother-in-law and the resultant unhappy atmosphere of the family. The book reflects contemporary society and the reformist point of view of the author. The vocabulary of the author is limited and his expression is poor. The only importance of the book is as a social document, for the author has narrated in it some incidents that actually happened.

Vanraj Chavdo and *Sadhara Jesang* are novels of little literary merit.

Mahipatram, though not a great writer, has been a pioneer in three forms of literature. He wrote the first social novel, *Sasu Vahu-ni Ladai* (1866); the first travelogue, *England-ni Musafari-nun Varnan* (1862); and the first full-length biography, *Uttam Kapol Karsandas Mulji* (1878).

Karsandas Mulji (1832-1871)

Karsandas was born in Bombay. He is known best as a great social reformer, who heroically fought "Maharaj Libel Case."

Narmad had entered into an argument with Maharaj Jadunath, the Head of the Vaishnava sect of Surat. Karsandas wrote about this and criticized the Maharaj in his journal *Satyaprakasha*. The Maharaj sued Karsandas for libel. Karsandas won, the charges he levelled against the Maharaja.

the powerful Head of a very wealthy and influential sect, having provided valid.²⁶

Karsandas was a journalist; and a writer, who wrote about 15 books. Of these, the most noteworthy is his *England-man Pravas* (1866). The travelogue is noteworthy for the information it provides as well as for the author's style. It has been translated into Marathi.

Nandashankar (1835-1905)

Nandashankar Tuljashankar Mehta was born at Surat. At the instance of Mr. Russel, an Educational Inspector, under whom he was working, Nandashankar wrote in 1866, *Karan Ghelo*, the first historical novel, or to be precise, the first *romance*, in Gujarati. It is based on the incident of the fall of Karan Vaghelo, the last Hindu King of Gujarat who, because of his erratic nature, was called Ghelo (mad) instead of Vaghelo (his family name). Karan abducts Roopasundari, the wife of his minister Madhav, who, enraged at the atrocity, invites Alu-ud-din Khilji, the Sultan of Delhi, to come and conquer Gujarat. Ala-ud-din attacks Gujarat. But no Hindu King comes to the succour of Karan, who is ultimately defeated. Karan flees from Gujarat and seeks asylum at Baglan, a small principality in the South. There in its fort he passes the rest of his life and dies in disgrace and distress.

Being the first novel, *Karan Ghelo* suffers from many limitations. There is nothing remarkable about its plot of characters, and it depicts the Gujarat, not of the days of Karan Vaghelo, but the Gujarat and there too the Surat in particular of the days of the author himself.

During the author's time, Surat was humming with activities of social reform; and the author has at many places in the book expressed his progressive views; as well as his views on morality, ethics, religion, patriotism and other topics of interest to his contemporary reader.

The two main qualities of this book are its graphic descriptions and style. The author is at his best whenever he tries to describe nature or places, or events.

26. Jadunathji Maharaj had sued Karsandas for libel and claimed Rs. 50,000/- as compensation for damage done to his reputation. Karsandas had submitted eight points in his defence. It was ordered by the court that Karsandas should pay Rs. Five to the Maharaj as compensation for the damage to his reputation. On the remaining seven points Karsandas's defence was upheld. The Maharaj was ordered to pay Rs. 11500/-, the full expense of the case to Karsandas.

Karan Ghelo made such a mark in its days that historical novels like *Vanraj Chavdo* and *Sadhara Jesang* by Mahipatram Nilkanth, and *Ranak Devi* by Anantprasad Trikamal Vaishnav were written in its imitation. *Karan Ghelo* was translated into Marathi as well.

Navalram Pandya (1836-1888)

Navalram Lakshmiram Pandya was also born at Surat. Because of family circumstances he had to leave school, and take up a teacher's job in a Surat school. By hard work, persistence, strength of character, conscientiousness and ability, he rose to be the Principal of the Teachers' Training College, first at Surat, then at Ahmedabad and finally at Rajkot, where he died at the age of 52 years.

In spite of the fact that he had little higher education, Navalram by close application, intelligence and integrity became a distinguished literary critic, a poet and a dramatist and a mature thinker in the fields of education and social reform.

Compared with Narmad, whose close friend he was, and with Dalpatram, Navalram was not a voluminous writer. But the general quality of his work is better than that of the two.

Navalram had edited for many years *Gujarat Shala Patra*, a periodical concerned mostly with education. He translated for the first time in Gujarati, *Meghaduta* of the great Indian Poet Kalidasa.

Besides these, Navalram's works include *Bhat-nun Bhopalun*, *Viramati*, *Bala Lagna Batristi*, *Bala Garbavali*, *Ingrej Loko-no Samkshipta Itihas* and *Naval Granthavali*.

Bhat-nun Bhopalun and *Viramati* are dramas. The former is a Gujarati adaptation of Fielding's translation (*the Dumb Lady or the Mock Doctor*) of Moliere's French drama, *Un Medicine Malgre Lui*. In this drama, Navalram has transformed the manners and customs and mode of life of Europe into those of Gujarat; and brought out the humour and beauties of the original in a remarkable way.

Viramati is a play depicting the courage and nobility of Jagdev Parmar, a prince of Malwa. The plot is based partly on history, and partly on legend. It is borrowed from the *Rasa Mala* of A. K. Forbes. Some of the speeches and songs relating the pathetic plight to which Jagdev has been reduced by a hostile fate are good. But the play on the whole is ordinary.

Bala Lagna Batrist and *Bala Garbavali* are books of poetry. Navalram has written only a few poems; but some of them

surpass those of Narmad and Dalpatram. In the thirtytwo poems of *Bala Lagna Butrisi*, the poet has exposed, sometimes through humour and satire, the evils of child marriage. The description of the party accompanying a child bridegroom as a party of animals, where each according to his or her status in the family hierarchy is introduced as an animal of higher or lower order²⁷ is a classic example of satire. In *Bala Garbha vali* the poet has composed, specially for young unmarried girls, some beautiful garbis.

Navalram's *Gujarat-no Pravas*, with *Ramiye Gujarate* (let us make a pleasure tour in Gujarat) as its refrain is an enjoyable piece, noted for the poet's observation of the salient traits of character of the people of various towns like Surat, Ahmedabad etc. of Gujarat, and his refined sense of humour. His garbi *Itihas-ni Arasi* beginning with the lines. "I held the mirror of history and looked into it. I saw nothing that was steady and permanent: I saw only shadows flying"²⁸ is remarkable for its style and diction.

His "The Englishmen rule; the natives stand suppressed",²⁹ was, as Gandhiji notes in his Autobiography, very popular among the young and the adolescent when Gandhiji was a school boy.³⁰

Naval Granthavali, in four volumes, is a collection of the prose articles and poems of Navalram. Of these, *Kavi Jivan* the first biography of Narmad, is noteworthy for its style and content.

Navalram is one of the best critics in Gujarati. He is the first critic to discuss in his notes and articles both the formal and substantial aspects of literature, ranging from words, diction, metre, etymology, and orthography on the one hand, to *Rasa*, imagination, fancy and conceit on the other. He has also emphasized the necessity of one language and one script for the country and uniformity of spellings in Gujarati. He has discussed problems of realism and idealism, poetic diction, scope of imagination in historical fiction, and relation between music and poetry. He championed the cause of mother tongue as the medium of education.³¹ As Narasimharao says, "Navalram was

27. જાન જનાવરની મઠા મેઘાડંબર ગાજે,
બકરીબાઈનો બેટડો પરણે છે આજે.

28. ઇતિહાસની આરસી સાદી, મેં જોયું માંહી,
થિરચાવર દીઠું ન કાંઈ, ફરતી છે છાંઈ.

29. અંગ્રેજો રાજ કરે, દેશી રહે દબાઈ.

30. Through oversight Gandhiji has attributed this garbi to Narmad.

31. English was the medium at the High School and the college levels of education, at that time.

not just a scholar indulging in ordinary literary criticism. He had a vision that reached far into the future. He was the first to visualize and discuss those important problems with which we are concerned today".

In the assessment of particular works Navalram comes out as a patient, sympathetic, frank and fearless critic, conscious of the sanctity of his duty. In his own words, "it is considered all over the world the duty of reviewers of books to commend books that are good and denounce books that are bad".³² And he has conscientiously discharged that duty, in spite of the fact that his personal considerations born of human weakness seem on rare occasions, to have the better of his judgement.

As a critic Navalram has always remained alert and progressive. He has revised his opinions, when necessary, as he has done in the case of Narmad. When he was young and fired with an ambition to be reckoned as the critic "who first perceived the existence and beauties" of the new School of poetry that had dawned upon Gujarat, he had described Narmad as a poet, the like of whom Gujarat had never seen before nor ever will see hereafter; but after a few years, as his judgement matured, he described Narmad as one of the two major poets³³ of their days and added that only posterity could rightly judge how far a poet went beyond the limitations of his time and place.

Ranchhodbhai Udayaram (1837-1923)

Ranchhodbhai was born in Mahudha near Nadiad. His contribution to Gujarati Drama is very valuable. He has written 14 social and Puranic plays, among which *Harishchandra*, *Jaya-kumari Vijaya*, *Lalita Duhkhadarshaka*, *Nala-Damayanti*, *Taramati Svayamvara* and *Premarai ane charumati* are noteworthy.

Of these "*Harishchandra*, a Gujarati adaptation from an English translation of a Tamil play, possibly made a lasting impression on Mahatma Gandhi, when he was a school-boy. *Jaya Kumari Vijaya*, published in 1862, is an original play. Its heroine Jayakumari is an educated girl, coming of a very poor family; and the hero, Pranalal is a cultured youth belonging to a wealthy family. Attracted by the virtues of Jayakumari, he decides to marry her. And in spite of tremendous difficulties, he succeeds in the end. The play, though not a remarkable work of art, was a great success on the stage, and served for a long time as a prototype for many subsequent plays.

32. "સારા ગ્રંથને વચ્ચાળવા અને જઠારાને તોડી પાડવા એ ગ્રંથપરીક્ષકોનો દુનિયામાં સર્વથા ઠેકાણે ધર્મ ગણાય છે."

33. The other one is Dalpatram.

Lalita-Duhkhadarshaka is a tragedy, depicting the plight of an individual crushed under the steam roller of a convention-ridden society. The parents of Lalita, the heroine of the play, select for her a groom for no other qualities than the reputed nobility of his family. The groom, Nandankumar, turns out to be a mean spendthrift debauchee, and a complete slave to his mistress. His mother and sisters, proud of the superiority of their family, out-Nandan Nandan in putting the helpless Lalita to innumerable soul-crushing ordeals. After the murder of Nandan Lalita leaves the house, and passing through various tribulations meets her death. The plot of the drama is ill-contrived. But the play was a rage in its days and its impact on the social thought of Gujarat was tremendous. It is said that some parents, moved by the plight of Lalita, broke off the engagement of their daughters; and for many years, Nandan was used as a common noun denoting an idiot of immoral character.

Disgusted with the crudeness and vulgarity of the Bhavai, Ranchhodbhai turned to writing good and decent dramas for the stage. To him, the drama was not just a piece of entertainment, playing to the gallery; it was an instrument to cultivate the taste of the audience and give them a glimpse of better life. It must be noted that he never compromised on this principle.

Ranchhodbhai has translated *Vikramorvashiya*, *Malavikagnimitra* and *Ratnavali* from Sanskrit, and *Tales from Shakespeare*, by Charles Lamb from English.

He has also written *Natya-prakash* and *Ran-Pingal*. Of these, the first one deals with the theory of drama; and the other, with prosody. In *Ran-Pingal*, Ranchhodbhai has scanned even the *Abhanga*, *Dindi*, and *Ovi*, metres borrowed from Marathi. *Ran-Pingal* is remarkable as the first detailed and comprehensive work on metres.

Bhagwanlal Indraji (1839-1888)

Pandit Bhagwanlal Indraji was born in Junagadh. He had practically no formal education. But by his work in the field of historical research and epigraphy, he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Literature in 1884 by the London University; and the Royal Institute of the Hague had appointed him a foreign Member.

Bhagwanlal had deciphered fully the stone inscriptions of Ashoka at the foot of the Girnar Mountain and corrected the misunderstandings and mistakes of James Prinsep, the first scholar to decipher the inscriptions.

Bhagwanlal had a genius for constructing history from available data. He accomplished the near impossible task of

correctly arranging the entire genealogy of the Kshatrapas only through numismatics. The conclusions he arrived at after deciphering the inscriptions of Kharvel are still held to be authentic and no one has been able to challenge or modify them.

Prof. Balvantrai Thakore says, "Just as in other fields, so also in this one (i.e. field of historical research), the land of our Gujarat-Kathiawad has given such a gem of a man, as would shine out even in the line of the most carefully selected, best of the scholars of historical research in the whole world. That gem of a man is Pandit Bhagwanlal Indraji."³⁴

Prof. E. J. Rapson, the author of *The Catalogue of Coins of the Andhra Dynasty, the Western Satraps, the Traikutaka Dynasty and the Bodhi Dynasty* writes at the end of his preface, "I cannot close these few words of thanks without some grateful acknowledgement of the debt which I, as a student of Indian numismatics, owe to the work of the great Indian scholar, whose memory is preserved in the Museum by the shield which records his munificent bequest—Pandit Bhagwanlal Indraji.

A glance through the pages of this volume will suffice to show that to a very large extent I have built on the foundations which he had well and truly laid".³⁵

Bhagwanlal's friend and disciple Jayakrishna Indraji, (1849-1929) also a man of little formal education, was an eminent botanist. His book *Vanaspati-Shastra* is considered by experts as a significant contribution. His *Baroda-ni Vanaspati* and *Cutch-ni Vanaspati* are still held in high esteem as reference books. Jayakrishna held the same unique position in the field of botany that Bhagwanlal held in the field of historical research.

Jehangir Ardeshir Taleyarkhan (1846-1923)

Jehangir Ardeshir Taleyarkhan was a Commissioner of Police in Vadodara Government. He is known particularly for his novel *Mudra Ane Kulin* (1884), influenced, like many other novels of the period, by the novels of Col. Meadows Taylor.

Mudra Ane Kulin narrates the tale of the sufferings Kulinsinh the hero, and Mudra, the heroine, have to pass through, and the happiness they ultimately find, thanks to the security and protection afforded by the mighty British Lion. The author links this plot with the story of the rise of Hyder Ali and the atrocities committed by him (Hyder Ali) and his son Tipu Sultan.

34. "Professor Thakore-ni Itihas Mimansa" (Prof. Thakore's investigations into the science of History) by Rasiklal C. Parikh. Prof. B. K. Thakore Adhayana Granth pp.27-28. Maharaja Sayajirao University, Vadodara.

35. Ibidem.

This novel and *Ratnalakshmi* (1881), another novel by the same author, are well-written. The characters are sharply drawn, and the author's insight into human nature is seen at work everywhere. The popularity Taleyarkhan's novels enjoyed in the last two decades of the 19th century was extraordinary. Taleyarkhan's was almost a household name for some years among readers of Gujarati fiction.

He has also written *Kavya Gutika Athava Sthiti Pradarshan* (1906), a collection of poems. Some of the poems are written in standard Gujarati, while some others are written in Parsi Gujarati i.e. in the idiom usually spoken by the Parsis, an ethnic group in Gujarat. As Sundaram says, "It is a matter of great surprise that a poem like this, characterized by class consciousness, could have been written in that age:

You wealthy one! what would you know about the sorry plight of the poor? what do you know about their hardships? Their miseries? The fire of hunger is aflame in the hungry. Whoever cares for children racked with hunger? What do you know of the naked's cold? You are wrapped in a shawl."³⁶

Hargovinddas Kantawalla (1849-1932)

Hargovinddas Dwarkadas Kantawalla was born in Umreth in the Kaira District. He is known more for his research and editing of considerable mediaeval literature. This he did, through over 30 numbers of *Prachin Kavya Traimasik*, a Quarterly and then through 35 numbers of *Prachin Kavya Mala* published by the Baroda Government, when he was an Education Officer there. *Premchand-nan Natako* and some other works of controversial authorship are among the books published under this programme.

Hargovinddas also wrote a poem: *Panipat* or *Kurukshetra*; two stories: *Be Baheno* and *Andheri Nagari-no Gardhavsan*; and three books: *Kelavani nun Shastra une Kala* (the Science and Art of Education), *Sansar Sudharo* (Social Reform) and *Deshi Karigari-ne Uttejjan* (Encouragement to Indigenous Arts and Crafts).

Panipat describes the several decisive battles fought upon the plain known by that name, near Delhi. It has no special

36. गर्नी नुं गरीबनी शुं समजे गमा,
 शुं जाणे जफाओ शुं दुःखनी गती.
 भुख्यांना भुखनी बळती छे आंच,
 टवळतां बच्चांनी, कोने ते दाझ ?
 ...नागांनी ताढनो तुंने ते शुं ख्याल !
 ऊननी तुं हूंफ ले त्हारी पीठे छे ख्याल !

Arvachin Kavita, First Edition, page 142.

literary merit; but it is marked by strong patriotic fervour; and some of the episodes are narrated with force and vigour.

Hargovinddas was a great advocate of simple, plain language of everyday use in literature.

Ichchharam Desai (1853-1912)

Ichchharam Suryaram Desai was born in Surat. Ichchharam is distinguished for responsible journalism and for saving thousands of poems of mediaeval period from oblivion by anthologizing them in eight large volumes of *Brihat Kavya Dohan*.

It is pertinent to note that Dalpatram had prepared two parts of *Kavya Dohan*. But they were out of print for a long time; and in accordance with the Government directive, portions depicting *Shringara* in akhyanas like *Okha-Haran* and *Nalakhyana* of Premanand, were deleted from them.

Ichchharam started his career as a journalist by publishing *Svatantrata*, a monthly periodical in 1878 at Surat. For his article "Give Us Political Freedom" published in the third issue of *Svatantrata*, Ichchharam was arrested, tried for sedition and acquitted. *Svatantrata*, however, was closed down in 1879.

Ichchharam started on 6th June 1880, the publication at Bombay of his weekly periodical *Gujarati*.³⁷ Many articles of Narmad, which were collected later on in his *Dharma Vichar* and the *Nari Pratishtha* of Manilal Dvivedi were first published in *Gujarati*. After the establishment in 1885 of the Indian National Congress, *Gujarati* became an able exponent of the policy of the Congress. For many years *Gujarati* remained a force to reckon with in the political and cultural life of Gujarat.

The Government, obviously, could not take kindly to *Gujarati's* frank and fearless expression of views. They, therefore, asked for a security of Rs. 2500 from *Gujarati* in 1910. Deeply shocked at this, Ichchharam for all practical purposes withdrew himself from *Gujarati*. After his death in 1912, his son Manilal took up the editorship of the paper and ran it till 1929, when it went into liquidation.

Ichchharam has written some novels, of which *Ganga Ek Gurjar Varta*, *Hind ane Britannia* and *Chandrakant*, in three parts are noteworthy.

Ganga Ek Gurjar Varta, (1888) was once considered to be a very good novel. Manilal Dvivedi had included it in his list of 100 classics of Gujarati literature. It has been translated into Marathi.

37. This name was suggested by Narmad to Ichchharam.

Hind and Britannia (1886) discusses the pros and cons of the British Administration of India on the basis of the historical backgrounds of India and England. Some Anglo-Indian journalists smelt sedition in this and they raised a hue and cry to get Ichchharam arrested.³⁸ But two English gentlemen are said to have read the book for themselves and written privately to the Government to say that they found nothing seditious in the book. The book has been translated into Marathi. *Chandrakant*, in three parts (1889; 1901; 1907) hardly a novel in any sense, had once sparked a controversy about its authorship. Some alleged that Ichchharam had got it ghost-written by some scholar of Vedanta. And one Harjivan Kevalram, a Haridas (Kathakar) at Dakore tried to make confusion worse confounded by equivocating that he had written³⁹ the book.

As a matter of fact, as Ichchharam's son Natvarlal says, Ichchharam was so heavily in debts that it was beyond his means to employ a ghost writer. Ichchharam has, moreover, published the names of the translators whenever he got any Sanskrit books translated by Shastris. *Chandrakant* has been translated into Hindi and Marathi.

This period is also notable for the following:---

Durgaram Manchharam Dave (1809-1876)

Durgaram Manchharam Dave known as Durgaram Mahetaji, because of his profession of a school teacher, is noted for his diary which records his public activities and minutes of the Manav Dharma Sabha at Surat, during the years 1843-1845.⁴⁰ The diary serves as the first autobiographical notes in Gujarati. Durgaram wrote prose earlier than Dalpatram, Narmad or Ranchhodbhai Girdharbhai. His diary, therefore, serves also as the earliest specimen of good reflective prose from which was born the form of the essay.

Vrajlal Kalidas Shastri (1825-1903)

Vrajlal Kalidas Shastri is noted for his pioneering work in the field of philology.

38. Some say Ichchharam was arrested, tried and acquitted.

39. "Written" might also mean to have taken down dictation; or copied.

40. Durgaram kept his diary till 1852. But most of it was destroyed in fire, when his school at the Chouta was burnt. Only the record upto 1-1-1845 survived.

Vallabhji Haridatta Acharya (1840-1911)

Vallabhji Haridatta Acharya, who assisted Pandit Bhagwanlal Indraji in copying the stone inscriptions of Ashoka. Vallabhji had also copied several stone inscriptions of Patan. He was a student of archeology and history. He is recorded to have translated *Ramayana* (1902) into identical metres in Gujarati. It is not known whether it is the entire *Ramayana* or just a few parts of it. The translation is unpublished. Vallabhji has also written some poems.

Ambalal Sakarlal Desai (1844-1914)

Ambalal Sakarlal Desai, is known for his mature and balanced discussion of problems connected with industry, politics, administration, economics etc. He is in some respects a forerunner of Mahatma Gandhi. His *Shantidas* (1900) is considered by some to be the first original short story in Gujarati.

(II)

PANDIT YUGA (1885-1915)

Govardhanram (1855-1907)

Govardhanram Madhavram Tripathi was born in Nadiad, in the Kaira District. Greatest good of the greatest number should be the aim of all man's activities and that good should be achieved by acting selflessly in any field—religion, politics, literature etc.—suitable to the taste and talent of man.

With this end in view, Govardhanram, at the age of 16 or 17 years, decided to dedicate his life to the cause of public service through literature. The very first desideratum for an artist is to remain true to his own self; and this could be accomplished only if the author were financially independent. Govardhanram, therefore, decided not to accept any job but to practise law, and to devote himself fully to the service of literature, retiring, come what may, at the age of 40 years, when all man's faculties are at their best. Because of certain circumstances Govardhanram had to make some slight adjustments in one or two matters; but his main decision stood. He gave up his very good practice at the Bombay Bar at the age of 42 years, left Bombay and settled down at Nadiad.

Govardhanram's reading of English and Sanskrit works was very vast. He was interested in all man's intellectual pursuits and with keen insight and sure grasp read books of all subjects under the sun. By his constant contact with the best minds of the world, ancient and modern, and by calm reflection and thought he had evolved his own point of view to observe, understand and assess life.

Govardhanram wrote in three languages: Gujarati, English and Sanskrit. He composed his first Sanskrit verse when he was 16 years old; when 18 years of age, he wrote into Sanskrit the description of the mountain Girnar; and started writing *Manodutam* in imitation of *Meghadutam* of Kalidasa. At the age of 20, he wrote in Sanskrit *Hridaya Rudita Shatakam*; and *Vidhi-kunthitam*, also a Sanskrit composition in verse to be submitted for the Sundarji Jivaji Essay Prize; at the age of 43 years, he wrote *Lakshyalakshya-Rahasyam* in the third part of *Sarasvatichandra*; and at the age of 45 he wrote three beautiful verses in *Madhavaram-Smarika*.

Govardhanram started writing in English also from the 16th year of his age. Till the 22nd year of age, except for the Sanskrit compositions including the *Hridaya Rudita Shatakam* and the *Vidhikunthitam*, he wrote only in English; and thereafter too he wrote occasionally in English. *The Classical Poets of Gujarat And Their Influence on Society and Morals*, which he wrote when he was 37 years old, is a whole book. Govardhanram's articles in English cover many subjects: Sociology, Education, Economics, Politics, Science, History, Philosophy, Law etc. With the solitary exception of one, which is a metrical composition, all other articles are written in prose.

Of Govardhanram's writings in Gujarati, *Sarasvatichandra*, *Snehamudra*, *Saksharjivan*, *the Life of the Late Sakshar Navalram Lakshmiram*, *Lilavati Jivankala* and *Kavi Dayaram-no Akshardeha* are books. He also gave many scholarly lectures like the one he delivered as the President of the first Gujarati Literary Conference held on June 30 and July 1 and 2, 1905 at Ahmedabad, which incidentally, was the first Literary Conference of any regional language in India.

Sarasvatichandra is a novel in four parts, each part having a different sub-title. The first part, *The Administration of Buddhidhan*¹ was published in 1887; the second part, *The Family-maze of Gunasundari*² in 1892; the third part, *The Political Administration of Ratnanagari*³ was published in 1898; and the fourth part, *The Dreamland of Sarasvati*,⁴ or as the author translates it, *The Dreamland of the Minerva of our Indian Atheneum*, in 1901. The book thus took 14 years to be completed.

Sarasvatichandra is a masterpiece not only of Govardhanram, not only of the age to which it belonged, but of the entire Gujarati literature.

The hero of the novel, *Sarasvatichandra* is young, well educated, cultured, sophisticated and very rich. He has been engaged to marry Kumudsundari, a beautiful, gentle, accomplished young girl. But on account of certain reasons *Sarasvatichandra* leaves home and runs away. Kumudsundari's parents, therefore, marry her to one Pramaddhan, who turns out to be libertine and insensitive to Kumudsundari's feelings. Passing through a good many vicissitudes and learning the lesson of life the hard way, both *Sarasvatichandra* and Kumud meet in an *ashrama* (hermitage) on a mountain Sundargiri. There, after much heart-

1. बुद्धिधन नो कारभार

3. रत्न नगरीનું राज्यतंत्र

2. गुणसुंदरीનું कुटुम्ब जाल

4. सरस्वतीનું मनोराज्य

searching, they decide to dedicate the rest of their lives to the service of their country; and Sarasvatichandra marries Kusum-sundari, a sister of Kumud.

Thus is the core of the story of *Sarasvatichandra*. But Govardhanram has developed it with many relevant side-plots and sub-plots and discussions of social, political and philosophical subjects. It has a world of characters ranging from those living at a purely animal level to those living at the highest possible intellectual and spiritual level, men and women of every age group and every level of culture, wonderful depiction of the conflicts and struggles within the innermost recesses of the human heart, picturesque descriptions and clear vision of a cultured and responsible man's duty towards himself, his relations and friends, society at large, country, the whole mankind and every being large or small, animate and inanimate, in the new age that had dawned upon India after its contact with the Western civilization. It has discussed logically and rationally every subject touching our life in that age of transition. That is why Dr. Anandshankar Dhurva has called it a "Purana", thereby implying that you will find elsewhere only that which is here; that which is not here, you will not find anywhere else.

The original intention of Govardhanram was to present to his readers the essence of his studies and contemplation of a life time. That essence could very well be presented in the form of an essay or a treatise, as well; but it could reach the hearts of many more readers if it were presented in the form of a story. That is why Govardhanram wrote this novel; and through the interaction of its plot and its characters, as well as through lengthy discussions, essays, interpretations and elaborations expressed everything that he wanted to say. Because of these, the flow of the story gets interrupted every now and then, particularly in the third and the fourth parts of the novel; and gross improbabilities like Kumud and Sarasvatichandra seeing one and the same dream, visualized for two or three consecutive nights, and many other inconsistencies, of a minor nature, have been suffered to exist. All these digressions, discussions, improbabilities and inconsistencies are, in the ultimate analysis, invariably related to the development of the plot of the novel and its progress towards the denouement.

The impact of *Sarasvatichandra* on its contemporary readers was phenomenal. Some writers, in its imitation, wrote novels in four parts; some, in its style, gave sermons on religion and philosophy; some imitated Govardhanram in language, style and diction, and one author went to the extent of writing a novel *Pramaddhan-ni Prabhuta* in continuation of the story of

Sarasvatichandra. The educated youth of Gujarat lived in the dreamland of *Sarasvatichandra*, Kumud and Kusum; and the solution of the problem of love between *Sarasvatichandra* and Kumud⁵ arrived at by Govardhanram became a subject of controversy among the scholars and critics for a long time. *Sarasvatichandra* was translated into Marathi, Hindi and Bengali. No other book of fiction has made so powerful an impact on its contemporaries and successors as *Sarasvatichandra* has made. Hundreds of novels have been written to this day in Gujarat; and there are among them novels a reader would not leave unfinished once he started to read them; the social and political scene of *Sarasvatichandra* has been totally transformed in the course of these seven decades, and many of the prophecies of Govardhanram in regard to the political complexion of the country have not turned out to be true. The problems of the days of Govardhanram are no longer existent; yet, from the point of view of the form, style, contents and greatness of vision, *Sarasvatichandra* still stands supreme.

Snehamudra (1889), the reflection of love imprinted in the heart, was first written in 1874-75; but was published fourteen or fifteen years later. Much was deleted from the text when it was printed in the form of a book.

The direct inspiration behind this very long poem is the death of the author's first wife Harilakshmi. But the author, instead of directly expressing his sorrow, expresses it in the form of a story based on the death of the wife of the hero, of the wife of his friend, and of the hero himself.

The hero of the poem is a resident of the Polar region in the North. He is an idealist, a brave young man. His wife is an extremely co-operative and loving lady serving as an inspiration to the hero in all his brave and noble deeds.

The hero conquers the region and, entrusting it to the care of his friend, proceeds forward with his wife to eradicate the demons. They come to India; and the moment they set foot on the Indian soil, they see a burning pyre, surrounded by a shouting and shrieking crowd. On inquiry

5. *Sarasvatichandra* and Kumud, probably because Kumud is a widow, decide not to marry, in spite of their eligibility according to the ideal and philosophy of love set forth by the author, as well as by the law of the land; and *Sarasvatichandra* and Kusum join in wedlock under pressure brought to bear upon them by Kumud.

the hero learns that a woman was about to be a *Sati*.⁶ The hero saves her and asks her what it was all about. The woman narrates to them the tale of her miserable married life, resulting from the perversity of the orthodox Hindu society. Shocked at the woeful state of Hindu women, the wife of the hero collapses and dies. On his return from India, the hero goes to a mountain, where he meets with the wife of his friend and her female friends, who had started out in search of him and his wife. He tells them his story, and as he narrates the incident of his wife's death, he too collapses and never recovers from his swoon. The friend's wife, shocked at this pathetic sight, collapses on the 'heart' of the hero and dies. Their heart-ghosts resting on their respective corpses keep awake. By this time, the friend of the hero happens to arrive there in search of his friend; and sees this 'pathetically lovely illusion'. He makes the heart of his friend unfold itself; and the heart starts unburdening itself. It is at this point that the *Snehamudra* really begins. At the end when the day breaks, a divine light emerges from the heart-ghost of the hero, with which the light of the friend's wife has already merged. The friend holds this divine light in close embrace and he, too, merges into it. The light moves upward and the sun emerges from the sheet of water and shines on the horizon.

The plot of the story is thus fantastic and complex; and the texture of the language is uneven. The diction, at places, is smooth and easy; at places, rough and affected.

But if *Snehamudra* is read with ample measure of patience and sympathy, the reader would come across some of the most beautiful descriptions of nature and majestic imagery. Here is a sample describing the monsoon clouds, as seen from the summit of a hill:—

And there again, how lovely a lattice is formed of a white cloud! And further there, those clouds—a marvellous design of ripples! spreading like delicate wavelets created in beauty on a lake by gentle breeze,—wavelets moving slowly, yet slowly, in crooks and curves, interlinked this moment, disjointed the next, in slow succession! There they form themselves into parallel pillars, huge and colossal, to support the dome of the sky! But

6. Suttee—the act of a Hindu widow willingly cremating herself or being cremated on the funeral pile of her husband as an indication of her devotion to him.

they, again, like legs of elephants, seem to move and approach the great King Sun, with the gait of an elephant.⁷

Snehamudra portrays the evolution of love between man and wife from its gross and physical level to its most subtle and spiritual form; and the progress and development of individual love to an all embracing universal love.

Sakshar-jivan: Govardhanram started to write this essay in 1898, after his retirement; and got it published, by instalments in *Samalochak*, a monthly periodical, for about five years. The essay has remained unfinished.

Like most of Govardhanram's works, this essay also is inspired by patriotism, Govardhanram says, "When the scholarship of Europe is resounding with phrases like 'Truth for truth's sake', 'Knowledge for knowledge's sake' etc., the life of the Sarasvati (goddess of learning) of our scholars ends in the servitude of Lakshmi (goddess of wealth)."

Govardhanram believes that the essence of the life of a Sakshara (a man of letters; a man dedicated to the pursuit of the eternal.) is to rest satisfied with the "Prasada of Annapoorna" that is with the necessary wherewithal for subsistence, and retiring from active participation in the activities for the welfare of one's own self or for the welfare of humanity at large, to observe those activities neutrally. Highly competent *Saksharas* observe objects that are seen and those that can be seen, find out their true nature and essentials and draw general conclusions and rules. Thus a Sakshara is a law-giver, in the widest sense.

Books on Navalram, Lilavati (Govardhanram's daughter) and Dayaram deal primarily with the portrayal of the inner self of those persons.

Navalram's biography is a balanced assessment of the life and work of Navalram, based on all available facts. Lilavati's biography provides a sympathetic analysis of Lilavati's intellectual and emotional make up and incidentally, Govardhanram's reflections on many philosophical topics.

Dayaram's biography, instead of giving bare facts about the life of the poet, deals more with the evaluation of his poetry and elucidation of his Shuddhadvaita philosophy.

7. વઢી પળે શી સુંદર જાઢી શ્વેત મેઘની પડી રહી છે ! વઢી અગાડી ધીર સમીરે સરવર ઉપર રમ્ય રચેલી નાજુક લહરી વાંકી-ચૂંકી એકબીજાની આગઢપાછઢ કંઈ સંઘાતી, કંઈ ત્રૂટતી ઘીમે ઘીમે પ્રસરે તેવી જ પાડી મેઘમાં માત શી દીસે લ્હેરિયાંનિ આ ! સ્તમ્ભ સમાંતર મ્હોટ મ્હોટ બની વ્યોમઘુમટને ધરી રાખવા પળે રહ્યા છે, પળ એ પાછા ગતિમાન આ થયા જ દીસતા રવિ-રાજની પાસે આવે ગજગતિથી ગજચરણ સમાન શું !

Govardhanram's *Scrap-book* (1888-1906) written in English, is a diary he kept since he was 30 years of age. It is a repository of the author's rambling thoughts, and some vital moral and spiritual conflicts. It provides valuable material for the author's biography, giving some glimpses into his family life, though it is not strictly one's *tete-a-tete* with one's own self.

Manilal (1858-1898)

Manilal Nabhubhai Dvivedi was also born in Nadiad. Having studied at Nadiad and Bombay, he worked as Professor of Sanskrit in Samaldas College, Bhavnagar. He died when he was only 40 years old.

Atmanimajjana, *Kanta*, *Pranavinimaya*, *Gulabsmriti*, *Balyilas*, and *Siddhantasar* are Manilal's main books. He also wrote numerous articles on philosophic and literary subjects, which have been collected in *Sudarshan Gadyavali*. He wrote several articles and books in English to elucidate the subtleties of Advaita Vedanta (Monism).

Atmanimajjana (1895) is a collection of Manilal's poems. Love is the main subject of Manilal's poetry. Manilal believes that Advaita (Non-duality) is easy to be experienced, once the true nature of love is understood; and the experience of Advaita is Moksha (Salvation). That experience is comprehensible only by the mind and in order to describe it in our ordinary mundane speech, we may have to use the terminology of our worldly relations. It is therefore likely that someone might feel that such poems depict not the spirit of non-duality of pure ethereal love, but gross and crude pleasures of the flesh. Some of Manilal's poems have been subject to this misunderstanding. It is, of course, not always the reader who is to blame. When the poet's own experience is imperfect and the poem fails to suggest the Advaita the poet may have in view, the poem usually seems to stop at the mere physical level. However in many of his excellent poems, one unfailingly experiences the depth and intensity of feeling, picturesque descriptions and perspicuous style.

Manilal's main contribution to Gujarati poetry, however, is a number of gazals written in the style of Persian Sufis. Though they are marked by a misuse of Persian words and by words of incomplete predication, they have caught the spirit of the true gazal.

Through these gazals Manilal has sometimes preached the tenets of Advaita Vedanta through the means of Sufi terminology;⁸

8. वस्ल; सनम; माशूक; कलाम; कतल etc.

sometimes he expresses his utter disappointment in love; or his unquenched thirst of true and sincere love; sometimes baffled by the inscrutable ways of Kismet (Fate), which tosses man between joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, happiness and unhappiness, he asks it, "Where do you lead me by this betrayal, O Fate?"⁹ and sometimes he describes the potency of love which makes one feel at the top of the world; or renders one oblivious of everything else.

Manilal's gazal beginning with the line,
 "Somewhere amidst a million disappointments,
 lurks Hope that knows no death."¹⁰

is a gem of Gujarati poetry.

Kanta (1882) is a play combining the Sanskrit and the English styles of dramatic technique.

Its acts, its divisions of acts into scences, its dialogues interspersed with verses, and its depiction of certain rasas like the *Shringara*, *Vira*, *Karuna* and *Bibhatsa*,¹¹ are in the style of Sanskrit dramaturgy. Its characterization, the conflicts raging in the heart of its characters, and the tragic end of the play evince an influence of Shakespearean dramaturgy.

The plot of the drama is, in fact, historical, but the author having found it improbable, has made certain changes in it. He has himself described the plot as imaginary. At the core of the play is a necklace given by Sursen to his wife Kanta, and the couple's faith that the necklace would not break as long as Sursen were alive. But apart from the fact that the necklace does break even when Sursen is alive, his wife Kanta shows all the traditional symptoms of a sati. At her behest, the bolted gates of the city break themselves open; vermillion and ember rain from her palms; and the funeral pile kindles itself automatically; and all this happens even while her husband is not dead! This incongruity weakens the core and comes in the way of a full enjoyment of the play by a judicious reader. But some of its descriptions, particularly the inner conflict of Tarala on her way to the bedroom of Kanta for cutting the necklace are beautiful.

This play was extolled as one of the best specimens of objective poetry in Gujarati literature by Ramanbhai Nilkanth. The Mumbai Gujarati Natak Company had inaugurated its

9. दगाबाजी करी कहिं तुं मने लई जाय छे, किस्मत ?
10. कहिं लाखो निराशामां अमर आशा छुपाई छे.
11. The Erotic, the Heroic, the Pathetic and the Repulsive.

theatrical activities by staging this play under the caption "*Kulin Kanta*" in 1889.

As K. M. Jhaveri observes, "It was a bold and a unique performance and shone like a gem when it was presented to the public. When it was staged in Bombay, it proved a great success; the warmth of the sentiments, aided by suitable theatrical "properties", kept the audience in a very happy mood from start to finish, and for several years "*Kanta*" played by the Gujarati Natak Mandali continued to be "the rage" in Bombay. After he wrote it, he left off writing plays, and it was Gujarati Literature that felt the loss."¹²

Manilal wrote *Nrisimhavatara*, another play, in 1897 at the request of this Mumbai Gujarati Natak Company. It is contrived on the model of Sanskrit plays. The plot is based on Puranic episodes, modified by the author to suit his requirements. It was staged in 1899 after the death of the author. It is not known if it was as great a success as *Kulin Kanta*. Probably it was not.

Prana Vinimaya (1888) This book epitomizes Manilal's study of yoga and mysticism. It tries to establish the superiority of Spiritualism over Materialism on the basis of the experiments Manilal himself made in the field of *Prana Vinimaya*—(Interchange of spirits). In this book, he has also shown similarity between Western Mesmerism and Indian Yoga and "Svara-shastra."

Siddhanta-Sar (1889) In this book Manilal has given an outline of the development of Indian philosophical thought and tried to prove that of all the religions of the world, the ancient Arya Dharma alone deserves to be the Universal Religion.

Bal Vilas (1893) is a collection of miscellaneous essays on religion and morality, which were specially written for school-girls.

Gulabsinh (1897) is a Gujarati adaptation of Bulwer Lytton's *Zanoni*, which impressed Manilal by its mysticism.

Sudarshan Gadyavali (1909) is a collection of miscellaneous articles published in the *Sudarshan*, a monthly periodical of which he was an editor from 1890 to 1898. These articles cover many subjects like religion, education, sociology, economics, politics, literature, music, etc. and they evince the range of Manilal's scholarship. Manilal emerges from the pages of the *Sudarshan Gadyavali* as a master of Gujarati prose.

12. *Further Milestones in Gujarati literature*, Second Revised Edition Pp. 208-209.

Manilal has also written in English *Monism or Advaitism?*, *Rajayoga*, and *The Advaita Philosophy*. The books were well received in India, Europe and America.

Manilal's translations from Sanskrit of *Malati Madhava* and *Uttara Rama Charita* of Bhavabhooti are noteworthy. Of these, *Uttara Rama Charita* was for many years ranked as an excellent translation. Manilal has also published *Charitrya*, a translation of the *Character* in English by Smiles.

As Dr. Dhirubhai P. Thakar, who has made a special study of Manilal's life and work, observes, "Manilal, after years of reading and reflection, came to regard Dharma and Love as the only objectives of human existence. After much contemplation he perceived the non-duality of the two and came to the conclusion that supreme love—all-embracing universal love—itsself is Moksha (Salvation). This strengthened his faith in Shankara Vedanta; and this conviction of non-duality was at the base of all his philosophical thought."¹³

Manilal has the greatest regard for the ancient Indian culture. Not only is he fully familiar with the best that Indian civilization has to offer, he has tried as best as he could to study and understand sympathetically the salient features of the Western civilization. On comparison, he finds the civilization of the East more worthy of regard and he has said so in plain unmistakable terms.

That Manilal held the civilization of the East in such a high esteem does not mean that he was blind to its major shortcomings. He, in fact, opposed uncritical conformism. His point of view towards woman, as evinced from his articles entitled "Nari-pratishtha" is certainly not the point of view of a blind traditionalist, and the stress he laid was not on external behaviour¹⁴ but on thought from which all behaviour springs. All this is worthy of a son of the Pandita Yuga.

Yet, sometimes, in order to exaggerate the greatness of the East, that is of India, Manilal has, in the course of scientific discussion, resorted to arguments which are not scientific; sometimes he also seems to be unreasonably prejudiced against the West; and as a result, he has not been quite fair to Narasimharao's poetry. Yet, it can be said, on the whole, that Manilal's regard for the East was born of his conviction that the civilization of the East undoubtedly excels; and quite naturally he refused to be swept off his feet by the strong current of Western civilization and social reform.

13. *Arvachin Gujarati Sahitya-ni Vikasrekha*, pp.84.

14. बाह्याचार.

Balashankar (1858-1898)

Balashankar Ullasram Kantharia was born at Nadiad. Like his close friend Manilal he too was devoted to literature and edited several magazines: *Bharati Bhooshan*; *Krishna Mahodaya*, and *Buddhi Prakasha*. He translated from Sanskrit, *Mrichchhakatika*, *Karpooora Manjari* and *Soundarya Lahari* and from Persian, some gazals of Hafez. He has also translated from Hindi, *Chandavali* of Harishchandra.

Klanta Kavi (1942) is a collection of Balashankar's poems. The title poem *Klanta Kavi* (The Tired Poet) is, in spite of its metrical and linguistic irregularities, note-worthy. Its expressions of intense love and devotion, which are equally applicable to Poetry, to the Beloved and to Shakti, are unique and some of them have the beauty of Classical Sanskrit poetry.

Balashankar is the first poet to bring into Gujarati, through his *Hari Prema-Panchadashi*, the abandon of Persian poetry. It is a collection of 38 lyrics. As Sundaram says, "In spite of the fact that their artistic form is damaged, these poems hold an important place in Gujarati poetry, from the point of view of the development of the gazal and as a new type of original lyrics."¹⁵

Save for three or four of his gazals, beginning with the lines:—

"Suffer everything that the Lord of the Universe makes you pass through".¹⁶

Or

"If the bosom friend is not the same, the whole world is different."¹⁷

Or

"There is nothing that I like except the face of my beloved,"¹⁸ which were well-known and popular. Balashankar was a long ignored poet. It was only in 1942, that Umashankar Joshi came out with his scholarly and well edited *Klanta Kavi* and revived him. Then only were we reminded of the fact that Balashankar's *Klanta Kavi* (the title poem of his anthology) was published in 1885, that is two years earlier than Narasimharao's *Kusum Mala*; and that the poem running into some 400 lines was different in

15. *Arvachin Kavita*—1946—pages 167-168.

16. ગુજારે જે શિરે તારે જગતનો નાથ તે સહેજે.

17. જિગરનો યાર જુદો તો બધો સંસાર જુદો છે.

18. દિલદારના દર્શન વિના બીજું મને ગમતું નથી.

content, style and diction not only from the mediaeval poetry, but also from the poetry of the period of Dalpatram and Narmad.

But in spite of its break with the past, *Klanta Kavi* was written in the style of Sanskrit poetry; while, as it turned out later on, the future of Gujarati poetry was, at least for many years, with poems written in the style of English poetry.

Balashankar has also composed some beautiful poems in Vraj Bhasha.

Narasimharao (1859-1937)

Narasimharao Bholanath Divatia was born in Ahmedabad. He wrote both in verse and prose. In verse, he published *Kusum Mala*, *Hridaya Vina*, *Nupur Zankar*, *Smaran Samhita*, and *Buddha Charita*. In prose, *Mano Mukur* in four parts, *Smaran Mukur*, *Vivarta lila*, and *Abhinaya Kala*. Besides, he ably discussed the authorship of the three plays attributed to Premanand and also the principles to serve as guidelines for standardizing Gujarati orthography. He delivered,¹⁹ under the auspices of the Bombay University, the Wilson Philological Lectures, entitled *Gujarati Language and Literature*, Volumes I (1921) and II (1932) and the Thakkar Vassonji Madhavji Lectures, entitled *Gujarati Language And Literature* (1932)²⁰

Narasimharao made his debut in literature as a poet. His collection of poems, *Kusum Mala*, was published in 1887. Just as Narmad's poetry turned out to be different from the poetry of the poets of the mediaeval period, so also Narasimharao's poetry turned out to be different from the poetry of Narmad, both in its form and contents.

Narmad had tried to absorb the influence of English poetry in his poems. But the extent and the depth of Narmad's study were limited; and his mind was restless. Narasimharao on the other hand, had the advantage of systematic university education and orderly thinking. Therefore, his *Kusum Mala* evinces the impress of English poetry for the first time in sufficient measure in Gujarati.

It was *Kusum Mala* that brought lyrics of love and nature, pieces of genuine poetry, written in the style of English poetry for the first time in Gujarati. It proved conclusively that a good lyric requires, besides the stirring of emotion (which Narmad called '*Josso*'), beauty of imagination, thought and diction and form.

19. From 3rd December 1915 to 11th February 1916.

20. In the beginning of 1930.

With the publication of the *Kusum Mala*, *Narasimharao* was acclaimed as the father of modern Gujarati poetry in spite of the limited range of his vision and other limitations of his genius.

Hridaya Vina (1896) has some khandakavyas besides subjective lyrics. It has more of reflective poems than nature poems. The buoyancy of *Kusum Mala* is here replaced by a spirit of seriousness. *Nupur Zankar* (1914) in spite of its poems like *Chitra Vilopana* and *Agni Hotra* has little fresh or new to offer.

Smaran Samhita (1915) is an elegy written on the death of the poet's son, Nalinkant. It is a sincere expression of tender feelings of a heart which, on one side has been dealt a crushing blow; and, on the other, is firmly anchored in the faith in God. It is the ultimate faith in Divine Dispensation and a true and humble bhakta's determination to submit to His Will, actively to merge his personal will with the Will of God and let It be done, that assuages his feeling of grief and makes him see death, not as an end of life, but as a gate to Eternity. With the tender concern of a parent, *Narasimharao*, with utmost humility, solicits the merciful Father to admit the guileless child knocking at the door to His auspicious Mansion and take him to His Bosom.

Buddha Charita (1934) is a collection of eight poems dealing with the life of the Buddha. Of these, one,—*Buddha nun Grihagamana*—(the home-coming of the Buddha)—is written by Damodar Khushaldas Botadkar, the remaining seven, by *Narasimharao*. Of these seven, one, *Tadguna* (Temporary replacement of one's own quality by a stronger quality of some nearby object) is original; while the rest are translations from *The Light of Asia* of Sir Edwin Arnold. Of these, the *Mahabhinishkramana* (The Great Departure), is as much a representative of *Narasimharao*'s talent as a translator, as his *Premala Jyoti*, the translation of *Lead kindly Light* of Cardinal Newman.

Narasimharao is greater as a scholar than as a poet. His articles collected in the four parts of *Mano Mukur* comprise discussions of fundamental principles of literature as well as studies and reviews of particular books. His discussion of the fundamentals bear testimony to his sound scholarship, clarity of thought, analytic talent, sharp intelligence, precision and thoroughness; and in his studies and reviews of particular books, one does not fail to notice his discernment and exhaustiveness. Sometimes he seems to be missing the wood for the tree; and sometimes one finds it difficult wholly to agree with his opinions; but his personal integrity is beyond the shadow of a doubt.

The two volumes of his Wilson Philological Lectures, *Gujarati Language and Literature* are his *magnum opus*. Narmad, Navalram and Vrajlal Shastri had done some pioneering work in the field of Philology. But it was Narasimharao whose approach to the subject was strictly scientific. In these lectures Narasimharao discusses in detail the growth and development of Gujarati, the forces that moulded it, its peculiar sounds and the rules governing their pronunciation, evolution of its nominal and verbal case terminations and the rules governing the etymology of Gujarati words etc. In fine, these lectures are the first fully exhaustive and scientific study of Gujarati. Subsequent studies may not have endorsed everything that Narasimharao propounded; and some might have actually exploded some of the theories of Narasimharao; yet Narasimharao's books still hold a high place among the few important books on the subject in Gujarati. They stand as a monument to the author's scholarship and scientific approach.

Abhinayakala is a treatise on 'Abhinaya'—an actor's expression of sentiment by means of posture, voice and gesture—which is the soul and spirit of drama. In this treatise Narasimharao has discussed scientifically the nature and the essentials of the art of 'Abhinaya', and suggested how in the light of the development of the art in the West, Gujarati stage could be reformed.

Smaran Mukur is a collection of pen portraits and profiles of some of the well known persons Narasimharao had seen or met mostly during his early years. The book contains some interesting titbits of information about some distinguished literary men, social reformers and public figures of the nineteenth century. It thus provides some glimpses into the nineteenth century life. But the irrepressible ego of the author, who cannot but look down upon most who are outside the charmed family circle, sometimes fails to impress favourably.

Vivarta Lila is a collection of notes, letters to the editors and light essays Narasimharao wrote under the pseudonym of 'Jnana Bal'. These writings discuss some problems of beauty and philosophy, often in a comparatively light and rambling style. They also make the beginning of the light essay.

Narasimharao's *Diary* gives, at places, an intimate glimpse of the tenderness of heart and resignation to the Will of God of the author who with remarkable dignity and self-possession, stood the tests an unkind fate often put him to.

Narasimharao was a major literary figure of his days. Mutually contradictory characteristics like vanity and humility,

strictness and softness, snobbery and sportsmanship had blended naturally in him. He had won the esteem and regard of his contemporaries as a poet who started the new trend of poetry, a critic who was hard to please, a philologist the like of whom Gujarat had never seen before and a frank and pure-hearted man with a deep and abiding faith in God.

Keshavlal Dhruva (1859-1937)

Keshavlal Harshadrai Dhruva is known as a translator, research scholar and editor of the old and mediaeval Gujarati texts.

Keshavlal translated from Sanskrit *Mudra Rakshasa* of Vishakhadatta, *Vikramorvashiva* of Kalidasa, under the pseudonym of 'Vanamali', *Gita Govinda* of Jayadeva, and *Amaru Shataka* of Amaru. He has also translated some plays of Shri Harsha and of Bhasa.

Keshavlal's translations are done after a careful scrutiny of different variations and arriving at what he considered to be an authentic version of the text. They are a reproduction more of the spirit and *rasa* of the original work than of its words and meaning. Keshavlal also tries to maintain the various levels of language and modes of expression of characters of different cultural levels as is wont in Sanskrit plays. This has, of course, sometimes resulted in the use of archaic or unfamiliar words from old or mediaeval Gujarati, especially in the translation of Prakrit speeches from the original. This has often rendered Keshavlal's translations obscure and inappropriate at some places. In spite of this, Keshavlal's translations were extolled for the spirit of the original they conveyed.

Besides translations, Keshavlal has also written, after much critical research, scholarly essays on the original works of his translations and on the life and work of their authors; fixed their dates, taking into account all available information and the views of authoritative scholars of the East and of the West about them. Experts like Anandshankar and Narasimharao have rightly protested against some of the methods of Keshavlal's research, because it sometimes jumps to conclusions beyond what the data would reasonably permit.

Keshavlal has also edited some old and mediaeval works like the *Kadambari* of Bhalan, some old Gujarati poems of the 15th century, and the *Anubhavabindu* of Akho. The *Kadambari* is well edited.

Keshavlal had started to translate the *Meghaduta* of Kalidasa in the style of the mediaeval akhyanas. He has written some poems. They evince his command over mediaeval, modern and

colloquial Gujarati. The translation of the *Meghaduta* is unfinished.

The Thakkar Vassonji Madhavji Lectures which Keshavlal delivered in 1932 under the auspices of the Bombay University on the "Critical Review of the Evolution of the Prosody of Vernacular Metres through Apabhramsha and Prakrit and Vedic Metres" are a work of great literary acumen, and scholarship of a very high order.

The name of Keshavlal was mentioned in some quarters as a possible helpmate to the author of the plays attributed to Premanand. His prose is remarkable for its style.

Vihari (1866-1937)

Bahecharlal Trikamji Patel—known only as Vihari—was born at Sihore in Saurashtra.

Sundaram has this to say about this poet:

"The nine lyrics of Vihari that have been collected in an anthology entitled *Rasmalika* evince so excellent a lyrical talent that his name needs specially to be remembered, even though his poems have not been brought out in the form of a book. The author has a wealth of language which is of an extremely high order and which is replete with the artistry of the language of the sons of the soil, a reach of imagination and an almost masterly dexterity in the composition of lyrics, which surpass those of all the present-day writers of *Ras*. *Hind-nun Zankhun Chitra* (A faint picture of India) is the best of all his compositions. In that poem he has given a glimpse of the past, the present and the future of India. We shall quote here a few richly imaginative lines describing a vision of the future of India:

"The slow and soft Himalayan breezes from the North will continue to blow; and heaps of diseases and evils and sadness will disappear and there will be peace and quiet, O Mother! The rains will sprinkle nectar and water the earth; and the Kalpa-Taru²¹ in its trench for water round its roots will yield a thousand-fold of what is sown. O Mother, such desired rains of gold will rain; and the waves of the ocean will flood our market squares with their gems.²²

21. A "wish yielding tree" of heaven.

22. મંદ મૃદુ હિમાલયાના વાય ઉત્તરના વાયા જશે રે,
માજી જશે રોગદોગ શોકના થોક, શીતઠતા શાંતિ થશે રે.
झरશે अमी झरता वरसाद भूमि भीजावશે रे,
क्यारडे कल्पतरुनो पाक कणना कळशी थશે रे
માજી એવા મોંમાગ્યા વરસાદ કુંદનના વરસશે રે.
आवती सागरियानी छोल रतन चोक रेली जશે रे.

This writer has shown a very remarkable skill in his translation of the *Meghaduta*. It is regrettable that his other works have not been made available to us in the form of books."²³

Vihari is recorded to have translated *Panchadashi*, *Brahma Sutra*, *Upanishads*, *Bhagavad Gita*, *Uttara Rama-Charita* and *Shakuntala*, among others. It is not known whether they were ever published.

Kant (1867-1923)

Manishankar Ratnaji Bhatt, better known as "Kant", was born in Chavand in Saurashtra. After graduating from Bombay, he joined the Education Department of Baroda Government and then of the Bhavnagar State. While at Vadodara, he read works of Swedenborg and was so much influenced by them, that at the age of 33 years he became a convert to Christianity. This conversion led him to such an intense mental conflict that at the age of 45, he renounced Christianity and rejoined Hinduism in order to be with his family and friends. His faith in Christianity, however, had survived till his death.

Kant has written some prose which includes two plays: *Roman Svarajya* and *Guru Govindsingh*; *Panch Samvado* (Five Dialogues); *President Lincoln-un Charitra* (Biography of President Lincoln); *Shikshanano Itihas* (History of Education); and *Siddhanta Sar-nun Avalokan* (Review of the *Siddhanta sar* of Manilal Dvivedi). He has, moreover, translated some works by Goethe, Swedenborg, Aristotle, Plato and Rabindranath Tagore. Kant has also written letters which reflect his sensitive and compassionate heart.

Of these, *Shikshana-no Itihas* (History of Education) still ranks among the outstanding books on the subject and his plays, though not of much literary merit, evince some enjoyable rhetoric.

But Kant is best known as a poet, particularly as a poet of *khandakavyas* which, along with other poems, are collected in *Poorvalapa*.

Kant has written only seven *khandakavyas*. Of these, three—*Rama*, *Kalpana Ane Kasturi Mriga* and *Mrigatrishna* are ordinary poems. *Atijnana* is tolerably well written. It depicts the conflict raging in Sahadeva's heart. Sahadeva alone of the Pandavas, has prescience and yet he is always treated as a junior and not consulted in important matters affecting the future of the whole family. He alone foresees the consequences of Duryodhana's invitation to a gambling session which Yudhishtira has accepted and which will reduce him and his brothers to

23. *Arvachin Kavita*, First Edition, 1946. Pp. 452.

the position of tongue-tied helpless spectators of Draupadi's greatest humiliation. Unable to put up with this, he seeks to turn to Draupadi, as he was wont to do in moments of serious emotional tension, for comfort. But realizing that he has forfeited his right to such a solace, as he would not be able to afford Draupadi his protection, in her hour of need, he, in utter desperation, gulps down the contents of a bottle and drops unconscious.

The remaining three—*Vasanta Vijaya*, *Chakravak Mithuna* and *Devayani*—are remarkable specimens of the art of *khandakavya*, which have set up a standard of high poetical excellence in Gujarati.

Vasanta Vijaya depicts the tragedy that was Pandu's lot in life. Pandu, the king of Hastinapura, with the curse of a Rishi that he would die the moment he made love to his wife, hanging over his head, retires from the activities of the world, moves with his two wives Kunti and Madri to a mountain, builds two huts there—one for himself and the other for his two wives, with an understanding that neither of them, when alone, should see Pandu²⁴—and leads the life of a recluse. Yet, in course of time, events beyond the control of Pandu so conspire that he, in spite of all his precautions and in the full knowledge of the consequences, is driven helplessly towards Madri, the younger queen, and succumbs to his fate.

The conflict here is not just a conflict between man and his inscrutable fate, nor between man and the beauty of the spring, nor even between the good and the evil urges within the heart of man. It is a conflict between Pandu's two urges—love towards a legally wedded wife and self-control consistent with his mode of life, a must for his survival—neither of which is bad nor immoral. Caught in a whirlpool of such a conflict, man is ultimately undone, whichever of the two conflicting urges gets the upper hand. Except for the footnoted discrepancy, Kant has very deftly and step by step contrived everything that inevitably leads to the final catastrophe.

Chakravak Mithuna is the tragedy of the life of a pair of mutually devoted birds—a male and a female *Chakravak* (the ruddy goose)—whose destiny it is to meet at daybreak, part at dusk and spend the night alone and unseen by each other, crying oneself hoarse.²⁵

24. The opening stanzas of the poem, however, give an impression that Pandu and Madri are sleeping not only in the same hut, but also in the same bed.

25. Hindu mystics and bhaktas regard *chakravak* and *chakravaki* as symbols of *Jivatma* and *Paramatma*.

Distressed at this and seeing no way out, the birds decide to bring this separation to an end by putting an end to life itself. And keeping themselves in the midst of the rays of the setting sun, they move upward and still upward in the sky, holding each other in close embrace, and as the last lingering rays of the sun are just about to dissolve into darkness, the birds in the closest ever embrace, shut their eyes and drop dead on the ground.²⁶

Devayani is different not only from *Vasanta Vijaya* and *Chakravak Mithuna*, but from all the other poems of Kant, inasmuch as it ends on a happy note. It depicts the transformation of Devayani's tender feelings for Kacha into a budding passion of love for the man of her heart. Unlike other poems of Kant, where love is doomed to failure either because it is not reciprocated or because something or someone else thwarts it, *Devayani* is a poem of joy and beauty. The poem, based on a Puranic episode where love between Kacha—the son of Brihaspati, the Guru of the gods,—and Devayani, the daughter of the Acharya of the demons, Shukra, at whose feet Kacha was sent to study, does not fructify, is incomplete; and hence, perhaps, it stops at this happy conclusion.

The plots of the khandakavyas of Kant are based on the most crucial moments of man's life, with a distinct beginning.

26. The poet had closed this poem with the lines
In that vast empty space
Nowhere is seen an animate being.

(अमित ए अवकाश तणी महीं
क्यंहि य चेतन एक दीसे नहीं.)

meaning thereby that with the death of these birds, the only animate beings in that vast empty space, all life came to an end. Later on after his conversion to Christianity, the poet made a small change in the last line and said,

In that vast empty space,
Nowhere is seen anything inanimate.

(अमित ए अवकाशतणी महीं
क्यंहि अचेतन एक दिसे नहीं.)

which means that the whole empty space became animated because of the animation of the pair of birds released from its physical bonds.

All antecedents remaining the same and every event, every reference, every word calculated to lead the reader to the conclusion of despair, the observation sought to be made by the poet by changing one letter in the last line, seems abrupt and unrelated to the whole.

middle and end and the poet delineates the subtle interplay of emotions that shape the ends of events and drive man to his inescapable doom.

The construction of the khandakavyas of Kant is similar to that of a Greek tragedy. In the first few verses there is exposition, where the poet gives the background of the story sufficient to enable the reader to follow the course of events to come. Then starts the rising action, moving slowly and steadily to the climax, which comes about halfway through the poem. Then starts the falling action, where the poet cleverly creates situations which serve as speed breakers and lead the reader to hope that the tragedy might be averted. And towards the last few verses of the poem, suddenly starts the avalanche which shatters all hope and leads the events to a point of no return. Kant's narration stops at that because, to him, it is the causality and not the immediately obvious event that is of greater interest.

Kant also makes a clever use of nature in his khandakavyas, sometimes portraying it as sympathetic to human conditions, sometimes as antipathetic to them and sometimes apathetic in the extreme.

With change of metre suitable to the changing moods of characters or situations, and with few but appropriate figures of speech, Kant reveals his superb craftsmanship.

Some of Kant's lyrics like *Sagar Ane Shashi*, *Upahar* and *Udgar*, have also been rightly esteemed for their lyrical charm.

Ramanbhai (1868-1928)

Ramanbhai Mahipatram Nilkanth was born in Ahmedabad. He took a leading part in the activities of social reform, and of public life at Ahmedabad.

Ramanbhai has written some poetry, but poetry was not his forte. His poems like *Tatkal Mahima*, *Tun gai* and *Tungabhadra* are marked by chaste diction and simple style.

It is *Rai-no Parvat*, (1914) a seven act play, on which Ramanbhai's fame as a creative artist rests. On the formal side, its idealistic characters, divisions of acts and scenes, its dialogues interspersed with verses, *Pataka sthanakas*,²⁷ irony, even stage directions are based on the model of Sanskrit plays; but the internal conflicts of the hero, Rai, in particular, remind one of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

27. Intimation of an episodic incident, when instead of the thing thought of or expected, another of the same character is brought in by some unexpected circumstance.

The plot of the play is based on an old story pointing to the moral that "everything is done by the Lord; nothing can be accomplished by us; it is He who can turn a mustard seed into a mountain".²⁸

But the creative artist in Ramanbhai has raised it to the level of a piece of art; and the social reformer in him has ingeniously used it as a vehicle for propagating his ideas of social reform, particularly the uplift of woman.

The hero of the play, Raj, an honest, straightforward, God-fearing young man and his widow mother Jalka stay as gardeners in a garden on the outskirts of Kanakpur. Parvatrai an aged king of Kanakpur, who had married a young girl Lilavati, happens to learn that Jalka knows the art of rejuvenating the old and the infirm. Happy at the prospects of his reinvigoration, he goes one night to the garden to see for himself how Jalka brings a withered tree back to life. In order to keep this trip a closely guarded secret from his wife and from the people of Kanakpur, Parvatrai and one of his confidential attendants enter the garden not through its regular gate, but through a hole in the fence. Raj, who is watching the garden at night, is surprised by the sound, and mistaking it for the sound of an animal about to break in through the fence, darts an arrow in the direction of the sound. Parvatrai is killed. He is secretly buried. The resourceful Jalka at once plans to substitute her son Raj for Parvatrai and put him on the throne of Kanakpur. Raj objects to this fraud. But when he learns from Jalka that she in fact, is Amritdevi, the queen of the late Ratnadipdev, king of Kanakpur, whose kingdom was usurped by Parvatrai, and he, Raj, was in fact Jagdip, the rightful heir to the throne of Kanakpur, he agrees to play his part. A word is sent to the palace that Parvatrai has entered a solitary cell for treatment, from which he would come out rejuvenated after six months. At the end of the sixth month, Raj, impersonating as Parvatrai restored to his youth and health, goes in procession to the quarters of Lilavati. It is only then that he realizes that by impersonating as Parvatrai, he will have to impersonate as the husband of Lilavati as well. This he had not bargained for. He makes a clean breast of every thing; retires for a fortnight to allow the people of Kanakpur time to consider if they want him to be their king; meets Vinavati, a daughter of Parvatrai and a widow since her childhood. They fall in love with each other. The people choose Raj as their king; and Raj marries Vinavati.

28. सांझासे सब कुछ होत है, मुज बंदेसे कुछ नाहीं; राईकुं परबत करे...

The hero, Rai, insists uncompromisingly on the purity of both ends and means, while his mother Jalka, the most important female character of the play, feels no compunction of conscience in regard to the means to be employed to serve her end. Of these two fundamental and mutually contradictory attitudes of man towards life, Ramanbhai has ably and artistically showed the attitude of Rai getting victorious in the end. In contrast with the *Kanta* of Manilal Dvivedi, the only literary play of any consequence till then, *Rai-no Parvat*, though not holding mirror to nature, is a fully satisfying work of idealistic art.

*Bhadrambhadr*a is the first full length humorous novel in Gujarati. In it Ramanbhai has exposed by means of humour and satire the rigidity, pettiness, vanity, and hypocrisy of the opponents of social reform.

The hero of the novel, Bhadrambhadr, is a representative of the orthodoxy which has grown allergic to anything that is non-Aryan, that is non-sanskrit, that is non-Hindu, that is different from their way of life, or traditional pattern of thought. The hero has, therefore, changed even his name from Dolat Shankar to Bhadrambhadr, the word "*Dolat*" being yavani or uncivilized or irreligious in origin. It is the pomposity, idiosyncrasy and hypocrisy of the hero and of the like of him that have provided a target to Ramanbhai. The novel depicts all levels of humour, ranging from the grossest to the subtlest.

But in the changed social circumstances of today, when the social evils attacked by Ramanbhai no longer exist or at least do not loom large, the interest of the book lies only in the subtle inconsistencies of human nature exposed here and there and not in the oddities and crudities of the speech and behaviour of the targets of Ramanbhai's attacks who are long dead and forgotten.

Ramanbhai has also written, in collaboration with his wife Vidyagauri miscellaneous humorous articles which are collected in *Hasya Mandir*. Some of them are good.

Ramanbhai is better known as a critic than as a playwright, or a humorist. Based mainly on Wordsworth's conception of poetry, viz. "poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; it takes its origin from emotions recollected in tranquillity," Ramanbhai's theory has assimilated the best of Sanskrit poetics and Western poetics and criticism.

Ramanbhai's articles on *Poetry and Metres*. *The Pathetic Fallacy*, *Origin of Poetry*. *The Nature of Lyrical Poetry*.

Subjective and Objective Poetry, bear testimony to the depth of his scholarship and clarity of thought and expression. His opinions, however, on some particular works, like those of Narasimharao and Bhimrao, the author of an attempted epic *Prithuraj Raso* have not been endorsed by his contemporaries, much less by later writers.

Ramanbhai's miscellaneous articles on religion and social problems were posthumously published as *Dharma Ane Samaj*. In many of these articles, Ramanbhai, an ardent Prarthana Samajist and social reformer has dwelt more on the moral and ethical aspects of religion than on its philosophical grounds. Many of these articles were written in order to controvert the views propounded by some of his contemporaries. They are distinguished by a sharp and logical mind of a lawyer; and are a valuable contribution to that kind of literature in Gujarati.

Anandshankar Dhruva (1869-1942)

Anandshankar Bapubhai Dhruva, a Professor of Sanskrit and later, a Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the Benaras Hindu University, holds a unique place among the scholars of the Pandit Yuga.

He has translated *Shribhashya* and written *Hindu Dharma-ni Balpothi* (a Primer of Hindu Religion) and *Nitishikshan*. He edited for some time "Sudarshan", monthly periodical of Manilal Dvivedi, after Manilal's death. And started his own monthly "Vasant" in 1902 and ran it for some 36 years. "Vasant" was the periodical through which the most important work of Anandshankar was done.

Anandshankar's articles published in the *Vasant* have been edited and collected by two eminent men of letters, Ramnarayan Vishvanath Pathak and Umashankar Joshi, in five volumes. Of these, *Apano Dharma*²⁹ comprises his articles on religion and philosophy; *Kavya Tattva Vichar*, is a collection of his articles on the essentials of poetry; *Sahitya Vichar*, contains articles on applied criticism and education; *Digdarshan*, comprises those on historical subjects; and *Vichar Madhuri* includes articles on miscellaneous subjects.

Anandshanker's reading of standard and authoritative books on religion, philosophy, history, politics and education by Indian and Western authors was so extensive that even among the masters of the Pandit Yuga, Govardhanram's is the only name that could be bracketed with his.

Anandshankar lacked the creative genius of Govardhanram. But he shared Govardhanram's aspiration of an enlightened life on high moral plane and an ever vigilant zest for the uplift of

29. Edited by Ramnarayan Pathak alone.

the country. Like Govardhanram, Anandshankar too has, with life as the centre, thought about all subjects, touching it at every point, and examined every problem rationally and like Govardhanram, Anandshankar too has expressed his thoughts and ideas in the terminology of the ancient books of the East. But while Govardhanram has used the terminology of many Shastras like Nyaya, Yoga, Kama, Niti and Vedanta, Anandshankar has largely utilized the terminology of Advaita Vedanta, and explained how man should look at life. Like Govardhanram Anandshankar also is a practical idealist, teaching us how to live a noble, decent, cultured life worthy of a responsible human being as long as we are here.

An important characteristic of Anandshankar's thought is its complete acceptance of whatever is good and wholesome in a theory or an ideology and a complete rejection of whatever is otherwise. Anandshankar has worked his way through a labyrinth of mutually contradictory thoughts, opinions, principles and dogmas by accepting what he thought to be good and wholesome and rejecting what in his opinion was not conducive to man's spiritual well-being.

Another characteristic of Anandshankar is his adherence to the principle of the Golden Mean, which he calls *Samata*. According to this principle, he always avoids the extremes and firmly adheres on the middle course.

This, of course, does not mean that he is equivocal or non-committal. He is usually suave and gentle; but he can also be blunt and outspoken, when necessary, as he has done in the case of some of the researches of Keshavlal Dhruva and of *Bhadrambhadr* of Ramanbhai.

Though Anandshankar has not written a single great book worthy of his intellectual equipment and eminence, discussing one subject exhaustively, and though all his thoughts lie scattered in notes and articles of moderate length, written at different periods of time, he has examined every important issue in the light of both history and philosophy, and has placed before Gujarat the purest and the loftiest ideals of religion and literature.

Balvantrai Thakore (1869-1952)

Balvantrai Kalyanrai Thakore, who wrote his poems at an earlier stage, under the pseudonym of "Seheni", was born at Bharuch. He is in more ways than one unique among his contemporaries.

A poet, a critic, a thinker, and a student of history and politics, Thakore, a lone wolf in the beginning, turned out to be a very powerful influence during the fifth and the sixth decades of his life. His poetry, and more than his poetry, his idea of

poetry have moulded the taste and thoughts of many a poet of the generation immediately succeeding him.

Thakore's main creative works comprise a collection of poems: *Bhanakar* (1951); a collection of short stories: *Darshaniyun*; and two plays: *Ugati Juvani* and *Lagnamani Brahmacharya*.

His main critical works are *Kavita Shikshan*, *Lyric*, *Apani Kavita Samriddhi*, *Navin Kavita Vishe Vyakhyano*, three parts of *Vividh Vyakhyano*, and two parts of *Praveshuko*.

He has, besides, translated from Sanskrit, *Abhijnana Shakuntala* and *Malavikagnimitra*, both of Kalidasa; and from English, *The Heart of a Gopi* (Gopi Hridaya) by Rehana Taiyabji. He has adapted from English *Squaring the Circle* (Soviet Navajuvani) of Valentine Kateyev.

He has written a biography of Dewan Bahadur Ambalal Sakarlal Desai; and edited some books. A large part of his writings, now under the care of Maharaja Sayajirao University, Vadodara, is still unpublished.

Bhanakar (1951) is a collection of all his poems of short and moderate length, and his sonnets including those that were published earlier in *Bhanakar*, Dhara I and II (1917 and 1928). It is a monument both to his zeal for experimentation and to his creative ability.

Looking at *Bhanakar* (1951) as a laboratory of experiments in form, metres and concept of poetry, one finds in it some specimens of poetry that is free from verbiage and sentimentality, poetry that is pregnant with meaning, and that has not emotion but thought at the core. One also finds in it poems dissociated from music as their invariable concomitant, poems that are to be recited not according to the rhythm of the metre, but according the rythm of the thought they convey. One also finds in it some combinations and variations of the length of the lines of metres; and metres like Prithvi and Anushtup in run-on lines and their caesura rendered flexible, tested to serve as blank verse.

From the point of view of creative ability, one finds in the *Bhanakar* (1951)'s best poems, like *Arohan*, *Reva*, *Bhanakara*, *Foy Sagar* (which the author later renamed as *Varsha-ni Ek Sundar Sanj*), *Junun Piyar Ghar* and *Vadhamani* and some sonnets of friendship and old age, for instance, a haunting rhythm, a beautiful play of fancy, a wonderful picturesqueness, and a power to move the heart. Unfortunately, such poems are not many in number.

Thakore's poems were getting published in stray periodicals for a good many years; and they, by their sentiments, style and diction were attracting the attention of their readers. But they had to wait for a whole generation for their warm reception and recognition. A collection of Thakore's poems, *Bhanakar, Paheli Dhara* was published in 1917, when the poet was nearing his fiftieth year of age, and not only his other collections of poems, but also his stories and plays, translations and adaptations, edited books, researches and criticism,³⁰ were published later on. Thus the major work of Thakore was done during the latter half of his life.

In 1917, when Thakore's first book of poetry, *Bhanakar-Paheli Dhara* saw the light of the day, the closing years of the first world war were rapidly changing the map of the world. Mahatma Gandhi had arrived on the Indian scene; and India was pulsating with new life from one end to the other. Old ideas and values had little of their attraction left.

Speaking about Gujarati literature, Narasimharao had never been a major attraction; and the charm of Nanalal's poetry was on its decline. The monotony of its contents and style was getting too obvious to miss sight of; and the readers were eager for something new, something concrete and tangible, something strong and vital, maybe due to the change that had come over the mood of the nation in every sphere of its life. This they hoped to find in Thakore's poetry; and more than in his poetry, in his conception of poetry.

Thakore's conception of poetry underlined the importance not of softness and sentimentalism but of strength and manliness, not of verbiage and rhetoric but of economy and pregnancy of expression; not of the sonority of words but of richness of contents.

This conception of Thakore, completely in tune with the spirit of the times, caught the fancy of the new generation of poets and critics that had appeared on the horizon; and almost all the leading poets of the Gandhian Era, in the initial stage of their career, came under the spell of Gandhiji with regard to their ideology, and of Thakore with regard to the form and style of poetry.

There was a time when Thakore's was the last word in poetry. His *Anushtup*,³¹ his *Gul banki*³¹ and *Mishra Jati*³¹ and his *Prithvi*³¹ in run-on lines and his sonnets and *vers*

30. Except his translation of *Shakuntala*, which was published in 1906.

31. Names of particular metres.

libre, had cast their spell on every poet, good bad and indifferent, of the Gandhian Era. Take any issue of any literary periodical of the thirties, rarely would you come across a poem which is totally free from the influence of Thakore. No poet or critic of Gujarat had ever made such a powerful impact on the poetry of a whole generation.³²

Thakore's plays and short stories have nothing much to commend. His translations from Sanskrit do not fail to convey the meaning of the original; but they are dry and fail to convey its spirit. In his *Gopi-Hridaya*, Thakore has made some changes in the plot of the original, with a view to making it compatible with his "atheist" and "rational" ideas. Apart from the impropriety of taking this type of liberty with a book, a lovely lyric in prose, noted for its devotion to Shri Krishna, the changes made by Thakore have done only harm to the original.

Lyric, (1928) first appearing by instalments in *Kaumudi*, a learned quarterly periodical, and later on brought out as a book, was written in order to controvert and discuss certain views about the form Narasimharao had expressed in one of his articles.³³ In *Lyric*, Thakore establishes that music and poetry are two different arts, independent of each other; hence lyric, though originally intended to be sung in accompaniment with lyre, does not comprise only those poems that can be set to music and sung. There are a number of groups like the ballad, ode, hymn, sonnet etc. which belong to the category of lyric. Thakore details these groups, explains their salient characteristics and illustrates his thesis by quoting poems, typical of each group, from English literature,

Kavita Shikshan (1924) discusses several categories of poets like major poets, minor poets, extemporaneous poets etc. and underlines some of Thakore's ideas about poetry that it need not be musical. It must be noted at this distance of time and in a history of literature that Thakore's extreme stand on the relation between

32. It must be recorded that, as early as 1909, Kavi Nanalal had stated clearly in his note on *Metre And Poetry* (Chhanda and Kavita) in *Indukumar*, Part I, to the effect that (a) music is not an invariable concomitant to poetry; (b) the inner beauty of meaning is more important than the beauty of diction in poetry; and (c) the rhythm of the poem should be in tune with the rhythm of its thought.

These views of Nanalal have, for whatever reasons, seldom been taken note of by Gujarati critics, though they, in fact, contain the core of what Thakore propounded some years later.

33. *Gujarati Sahityaman Sangitakavya*; *Kaumudi*, 1.1

music and poetry and his emphasis on thought (Vichar), as its essential ingredient are largely rooted in his reaction to the poetry of his eminent contemporaries, Nanalal and Narasimharao. Their poetry was musical and emotional in nature. Again, Thakore's stand on musicality and emphasis on 'Thought' are honoured by him more in theory than in practice. Some of his own best poems as well as the poems he selected from Gujarati poetry for his *Apani Kavita-Samriddhi* (Our Treasure of Poetry) and the *Navin Kavita Vise Vyakhyano* (Lectures on New Poetry) are cases in point.

Apani Kavita Samriddhi (1931; 1939) is a collection of 85 poems written by 57 poets of the post—1850 period. The poems are arranged subject wise in nine bunches ranging from poems on poets and poetry to reflective poems. The compilation was designed to enable lovers of poetry to discriminate between good poetry and bad and initiate them into the appreciation of the beauty of the poems written largely in the Gandhian Era. More than the poems themselves, the comments on them were, therefore, intended by Thakore to be the main function of the book.

Though some of the poems selected by Thakore are excellent specimens of poetry written during the Gandhian Era, there are many poems here, which not only are not representative of the talent of their poets, but as Thakore himself obliquely acknowledges, do positive injustice to some poets.

Comments, the only means to the end Thakore had in view, evince, at places, Thakore's discernment and insight. But, as I have ventured to show with examples elsewhere,³⁴ Thakore has fumbled at several places in grasping the importance of poems and in defining the nature of certain figures of speech. At times, he remains non-committal or ambiguous in his comments.

In spite of this, the book is the first of its kind, inasmuch as the compiler here has set out with a definite objective of initial appreciation of poetry, in view. It is not just an anthology of poems of a particular period or of poems influenced by a particular ideology or school of thought. That Thakore has not fully succeeded in achieving his objective is another matter. He has succeeded in giving a new directive in this field.

Navin Kavita Vise Vyakhyano (1943) is a collection of Thakore's four lectures on New Poetry. In these lectures Thakore

34. My article *Apani Kavita Samriddhi* published in the Thakore Birth Centenary Number of *Granth*, a noted Gujarati Monthly periodical, dedicated to reviews and criticism of books. The article is included in my *Balvantrai Thakore* (1976), a collection of eight of my articles on Thakore.

has tried to present his concept of poetry in a comprehensive way and illustrate it by poems written in the Gandhian Era. For this, he has used the same classification as he did in his book *Lyric* and instead of illustrating the several categories with English lyrics, as he did earlier in *Lyric*, he has given Gujarati illustrations. As against the widely prevalent notion in the pre-Gandhian Era that singability and emotion constitute the *sine qua non* of poetry, Thakore advocated the dissociation of music from poetry save in a song,—music and poetry being two different arts, independent of each other. Thakore has emphasized the importance of thought,³⁵ rather than bare emotion, in poetry. Thakore did accept and assimilate from time to time fresh and new points of view, with the result that his definition of poetry in *Navin Kavita Vise Vyakhyano*³⁶ remains hardly a definition at all. Yet in his assessment and evaluation of particular poems in this book, he holds on to his original notion.

Vividh Vyakhyano is a collection in three parts of Thakore's lectures on various subjects. The first part, published in 1945, comprises Thakore's lectures on Govardhanram and his works. The second part, published in 1948, deals with seven writers such as Premanand, Kalapi, Navalram etc. The third part, published posthumously in 1956, is a collection of lectures, not on particular authors or books but on miscellaneous subjects like *One Script One Language*, *Modern Gujarati Literature*, *Nursing the sprout of Genius*, *Gujarati People and Gujarati Language* etc.

Praveshako, a posthumous publication, in two parts (first part published in 1960; the second part in 1961) is a collection of Thakore's introductions and prefaces to several books.

The most characteristic feature of Thakore's criticism is his individuality. The range of Thakore's interests is wide enough; but it lacks the depth and precision of Narasimharao and the breadth of view and interest of Anandshankar. Thakore is peculiarly independent. Without being guided by the opinions of others, he examines every question on its own merits and comes to his own conclusion. Sometimes, he just hits upon an idea that is different from the others and rests at that.

35. *Vichar* in Gujarati. This he much later on termed as *Dhyartha*, in order to convey the sense of an *idea*.

36. Simple perspicuous, sensuous, imaginative, sculptural, picturesque, concrete, rhythmical, harmonious, well-proportioned, radiant, brilliant, impassioned, profound—these are the qualities that constitute poetry of the highest and the best order.

Thakore is intolerant of mediocrity and of servile imitations. He will always be remembered for saving Gujarati poetry from sinking into sweet sounding verbiage and morbid sentimentalism.

Kalapi (1874-1900)

Sursinhji Takhtasinhji Gohel, known only as Kalapi, was a ruling prince of Lathi, a small native State in Saurashtra. He lost both his parents when he was a child. At the age of sixteen years, he was married to two wives. One of them was Rajba of Roha, Cutch, and the other was Anandiba of Kotda-Sangani.

Rajba or Rama as Kalapi refers to her, had brought in her train a little girl named Monghi, whom Kalapi refers to as Shobhana, as a maid servant. Attracted by her smartness Kalapi undertook to educate her; and with the passage of time fell in love with her. Their secret meetings aroused the suspicion of Rama, a haughty lady by nature. Kalapi got Shobhana married to a young man of her own caste; but he turned out to be insensitive to the finer feelings of Shobhana, who was brought up in better cultural surroundings. He began to ill treat Shobhana. Concerned at the sad plight of the girl he loved ardently, Kalapi got her divorced and at great personal risk, married her in July, 1898. Barely two years after this marriage, he died on 10-6-1900.

Kalapi was installed on the Gadi of his State and vested with full administrative powers in 1895, when he was 21 years of age.

Kalapi had not much of formal education though he was for about nine years at the Rajkumar College, Rajkot, where he was sent by the Administrator of his State during the period of his minority. But he read much after leaving College. As his letters reveal, he applied himself closely to the study of English and Sanskrit poetry, and of philosophy. Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Shelley among poets, and Plato, Emerson and Swedenborg, among philosophers were his favourite authors. In Gujarati he had read almost everything, old and new, and maintained friendship with distinguished writers like Manilal Nabhubhai Dvivedi, Govardhanram Tripathi, Manishankar Bhatt-Kant, Tribhuvan Premshankar, Janmashankar Mahashankar Buch---Lalit and others. Kalapi was in regular correspondence with persons like these and exchanged his views with them.

Of these, Kant edited the poems of Kalapi, brought them out in the form of a book entitled *Kalapi-no Kekarav* (the 'Cry of the Peacock') in 1907, with a beautiful poem *Kalapi-ne*

Sambodhan addressed to Kalapi.³⁷ Tribhuvan Premshankar wrote *Kalapi-no Viraha*, which Nanalal ranks among the best elegies in Gujarati literature.

Besides poems, which have been collected in the *Kalapi-no Kekarav*, Kalapi has written *Kashmir-no Pravas*, *Char Samvado* (Four Dialogues); *Swedenborg-no Dharma-Vichar*. He adapted two novels from English: *Mala and Mudrika* and *Nari-Hrudaya*. His letters, about 535 in number, are collected in *Kalapi-ni Patradhara*.

Kalapi is, however, best known as a poet. And except for Dalpatram, and to some extent Meghani (who, incidentally, was more popular as a singer of folk-songs and a prose-writer rather than as a poet), Kalapi was the most popular poet of Gujarat. For a whole generation he ruled over the hearts of the young adolescents of Gujarat. And he is fairly popular even now.

Kalapi is essentially a subjective poet. All his poems portray the conflicts and pathos of his personal life. The question that obsesses his mind is of love—love for both Rama and Shobhana.

37. Some one has said that this poem was originally addressed to Swedenborg. In *Buddhiprakasha* February 1951, Ramnarayan V. Pathak wrote to say that he remembered Kavi Nanalal having told him that Kant's poem, published under the caption *Kalapi-ne Sambodhan*, was originally addressed to him (Nanalal). Pathak seemed to agree with this; and tried to explain how the poem, and the stanza referring to the Gayatri Mantra in particular, could be taken as an allusion to Nanalal. Pathak also seemed to suggest that the particular stanza alluded more aptly to Nanalal than to Kalapi.

Conceding that the poem was originally addressed to Nanalal, we would do well to remember that Kant himself had got this poem published as an address to Kalapi, when Nanalal was alive. This means that he must have made appropriate changes in the poem and taken care to ensure that the poem unmistakably alluded to Kalapi.

I, therefore, wrote in the March 1951 issue of the *Buddhiprakasha* and tried to explain how the whole poem, including the stanza referring to the Gayatri Mantra alludes to Kalapi.

Even if some documentary or other strong evidence comes forth at some future date to support the contention that the poem was originally intended to be an address to Nanalal or to Swedenborg or to someone else, it will only provide one more proof that some poets are used sometimes to modify an earlier poem in order to use it in another content. The poem as it stands to-day is definitely intended by the poet to be an address to Kalapi.

He is hankering after keeping both of them together and loving them both in equal measure. But that was not to be. He, therefore, tries, as he has done in his *Hridaya-Tripiti* (Trinity of Hearts), to secure from a world of fantasy that which the real life denied him.

The love of Kalapi has, of course, not been able to transgress the bounds of physicality. But the main characteristic of true love—to live for the other one, to see from the other one's eyes, to try to understand the feelings of the other one and do justice to him or her—is already there in Kalapi.

Kalapi's conception of love is, as Ramanbhai Nilkanth has suggested, the conception of a ruler in mediaeval Saurashtra. To Kalapi, woman is a *Bhojya*, an object of enjoyment, and man, a *Bhokta*, the one who enjoys. One could go even further and state that Kalapi's conception of love is not the conception of love of only a ruler in mediaeval Saurashtra; it is the conception of man and probably woman too not only of mediaeval but also of the present day India, and perhaps of most of the world. It would have been much easier for Kalapi, the ruler, to carry on his clandestine affair with Shobhana without any qualms of conscience, and live a trouble free life. But Kalapi at the risk of his life got Shobhana divorced and married her.

Kalapi is continuously obsessed with the thought of the transitoriness of life. That is why he is extremely impatient. He cannot bear to wait. Nor can he accept any limitations. Moderation is not his cup of tea. He always loves the extreme: extreme love or extreme hatred.

Kalapi is an extremely soft-hearted man. To him the entire nature is live and animate. His heart therefore revolts at the thought of giving offence even to the smallest of the creatures. To him the universe is the hermitage of a saint and his prayer to the Almighty is not to let his heart lose its sensitivity and ever get hardened.

Kalapi's khandakavyas like *Hridaya-Tripiti*, *Bilva-Mangal*, *Sarasi*, *Kanya ane Kraunch*, and gazals like *Hamara Rah*, *Sanamne*, *Apani Yadi* and many other poems have endeared Kalapi to lovers of poetry in Gujarat.

Kalapi had attempted to write *Hamir Kavya*, which its editor termed as *Hamirji Gohel*, in the style of Sanskrit Mahakavya. Only four of its cantos have been recovered. It is not known whether the poem was left unfinished at the fourth canto or whether it was completed by Kalapi but the other cantos were lost. The poem was written in 1897. As Kalapi's letters on his friend Jatil (Jivanram Lakshmiram Dave) reveal,

Jatil provided Kalapi with the plan and outlines of the incidents to be narrated in the poem.

The hero of *Hamir Kavya* is Hamirji of the House of Gohels of which Kalapi was a scion. The invasion of Somanatha by Mohammed Gazni is imminent. There is excitement everywhere and thoughts of all Hindus converge on the defence of Somanatha. Hamirji's brother's wife taunts him for staying at home when he, in fact, should be at Prabhas Patan. Cut to the quick, Hamirji collects a small army and leaves for Somanatha. On his way, haunted by the thought that his line would come to an abrupt end in the likely event of his death on the battle field, he marries the daughter of a Bhil Chief, stays overnight with her and proceeds to Somanatha with his father-in-law the next morning. Both Hamirji and the Bhil Chief are killed in the battle; but, the son born posthumously to Hamirji's wife continues the traditions of the family.

The beauty of the Bhil girl and the uncouth but hospitable way of life of the Bhils are very well described.

Hamir-Kavya, *Hridaya-Tripiti* and many other khandakavyas of Kalapi abound in picturesque descriptions of the beauty of the human form and of nature. A felicitous poet, he is one of the most quoted writers. As a writer of gazals, he has outlived most of his compeers, in spite of his shortcomings in technique.

Kalapi's poems, coming unreservedly as they do, straight from the heart, suffer from a lack of intellectual restraint and artistic finesse. That is why one frequently comes across words of incomplete prediction, repetitions and prolixity. The early verses of Kalapi evince a strong influence of English Romantic poets like Shelley, Keats, Byron and Wordsworth.

The letters which Kalapi wrote to his friends, close relatives and acquaintances have been published in 1931 as *Kalapi-ni Patradhara*. They provide a key to his life and poetry and lay bare a heart that is transparently sincere, sick of the hollow pomp and pageantry of the royal court, contemplating abdication and hankering after a life of love and serious reading.

Kalapi's account of travels, *Kashmir-man Pravas* is also written in the form of epistles addressed to his private tutor N. B. Joshi. It is a good specimen of prose, notable for some of its descriptions of nature and the feelings those scenes evoked in the heart of the author, an idealist young man in his teens. The natural beauty of Kashmir captivates his heart to such an extent that he gives his travels an alternative title, "*Svarganun Svapnun*" (a vision of Paradise) and feels the pangs of a paradise lost when he leaves Kashmir:

Now I have left that paradise! Now I have lost that happiness. Now has departed that Joy! Only in the dreams will now be seen that exquisite workmanship! Those sweet songs of the birds will now meet the ears only in sleep! In dreams only will now be heard the roar of the Jelum! Only in dreams would now be seen that Dal-lake, that Takht-e-Suleman, that Woolar lake, those rivers and brooks, those fruits and flowers, and that vegetation; I could weep, but to what avail?³⁸

In the *Char Samvado*, the dialogue between Gopichand and Menavati is noteworthy for its rhetoric. The rest is ordinary stuff.

Nanalal (1877-1946)

Few poets in Gujarat have reached as high a zenith in esteem as Nanalal, who during his own life time was acknowledged as the greatest lyrical poet of Gujarat.

Nanalal Dalpatram Kavi was born in Ahmedabad. Brought up in an atmosphere of simplicity and deep religious fervour, Nanalal was deeply influenced during his formative years by his father Dalpatram, the poet, and Kashiram Dave, a pious soul and excellent teacher, under whom he studied at Morvi and Pune, and at a later stage by his wife Manekba, a worthy representative of the Indian Womanhood.

After doing his M.A., he worked as Principal of the Scott College, Sadra, a teacher at the Rajkumar College, Rajkot, a *Sar-Nyayadhish* (Chief Judge) of the Rajkot State, and the Chief Education Officer of Kathiawad (Saurashtra) Agency. In 1921, he resigned that post and joined Mahatma Gandhi, whose impact on the political, social and cultural life of the nation had started drawing talented idealists close to him. After some time, however, Nanalal differed from Gandhiji, and left him. Since then he dedicated himself exclusively to his pen, till his death in 1946.

Nanalal had started writing when Dalpatram was still alive. When the first Gujarati Literary Conference was held in 1905 in Ahmedabad under the presidentship of Govardhanram, Kant, in his lecture on "New Gujarati Poetry" read some-portions from *Vasantotsava* (1905) and heralded the arrival of Nanalal on the literary scene of Gujarat by quoting a line of Nanalal himself;

38. હવે તે સ્વર્ગ છોડ્યું ! હવે તે સુખ સ્વપ્ન ! હવે તે આનંદ ગયો ! તે સ્વપ્નમાં જ જોવાની ! તે પક્ષીઓનાં મધુર ગીત તો હવે નિદ્રામાં જ કાને પડશે ! જેલમ નદીની તે ગર્જના હવે સ્વપ્નમાં જ સંભળાશે ! સ્વપ્નમાં જ હવે તે ડાલ-લેક, તે તસ્તે સુલેમાન, તે વૂલર લેક, તે નદીનાઢાં, તે ફલ્લૂલ અને તે વનસ્પતિ દર્શન દેશે ! રોડ તો પણ શું ?

The lordly full-blown moon, showering his nectar has risen.³⁹

Nanalal is a voluminous writer. Principal among his works of poetry are: *Ketalank Kavyo*, three parts, (1903, 1908, 1935); *Rajasutroni Kavyatriputi* (1903, 1905, 1911); *Vasantotsava* (1905) *Nana Nana Ras*, three parts, (1910, 1928, 1937); *Chitradarshano* (1921); *Premabhakti Bhajanavali* (1924); *Kurukshetra* (1926-1940); and *Hari-Darshan* and *Venu Vihar* (1942). *Hari Samhita*, a posthumous publication, came out in 1959.

Nanalal has also written lyrical dramas and prose. Chief among his lyrical dramas are *Indukumar*, three parts (1909, 1927, 1932), *Jaya-Jayant* (1914), *Rajarshi Bharat* (1922), *Vishvagita* (1927), *Jehangir-Noorjehan* (1928), *Shahanshah Akbarshah* (1930), *Sanghamitra* (1931), and *Gopika* (1935). His main prose works are *Usha* (1918), *Sahityamanthan* (1924), *Udbodhan* (1927), *Ardhashatabdina Anubhav-bol* (1927), *Sansarmanthan* (1927), *Kavishvara Dalpatram*, three parts (1933, 1934-1940, 1941), *Apanan Sakshar-ratno*, two parts, (1934, 1935), and *Sarathi* (1938).

Nanalal has translated from Sanskrit, *Abhijnana Shakuntala* and *Meghaduta* of Kalidasa, *Bhagavad Gita*, *Shikshapatri* and five *Upanishads*.

He has also written some school books for children.

POETRY

Nanalal has written numerous poems of varying length. They comprise lyrics and bhajans (devotional songs), khandakavyas and a mahakavya. Among his short poems, there are three parts each of *Ketalank Kavyo* and *Nana Nana Ras*; among khandakavyas, there is *Chitradarshano* and among the mahakavya, there is *Kurukshetra*. During the closing years of his life, the poet had started writing *Hari-Samhita*, a Virata Kavya, a *Bhagavata* of the modern age. It has remained incomplete. Like the *Siddha Hema Shabadanusahasana* of Hemachandra it was placed on an elephant's back and taken out in procession, through the main streets of Ahmedabad to the Gujarat Vidyapith on November 28, 1959 and symbolically honoured by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India.

Of these, Nanalal's songs and lyrics are his most remarkable contribution. The tunes, the verbal music, the flights of fancy, the tenderness of sentiments and high suggestivity of a good many of these are unique and unsurpassed not only in the poetry of Nanalal, but also in the entire Gujarati poetry till then. These poems cover a whole gamut of emotions ranging from the first

39. ऊग्यो प्रफुल्ल अमीवर्षण चंद्रराज.

indistinct stirrings of love in a young girl's heart to the supreme abandon of a man who has transcended all human frailties, attachments and ambitions. Sings Nanalal's Dhumaketu (Comet):—

The Brahmanda pervaded by Brahma,
Is an impentetrable grove of happiness,
There I fly alone.
The man, the world, the sun,
and lovely light of moon,
What a beauty this universe!
But I fly alone!

* * *

I closed my dazzling feathers
and they echoed "Ahalek",
and the Sadhus heard "Bhekh",
I search for the word on every
snow-clad peak of the Himalayas
And fly alone!⁴⁰

Nanalal, the poet of the Sublime, imagines Brahma, the Ultimate Reality as a fan and sings:

This fan, the colour of a lotus blue, O Nandalal!
Studded with sparkling gems, and
fascinating, my Nandalal!
Brahmaa, the creator impels this fan that is Brahma,
O Nandalal!

In it shines the Sun of gold, O Nandalal!
And spread of silver Moon, My Nandalal!
Brahmaa, the Creator, impels this fan
that is Brahma, O Nandalal!⁴¹

40. ब्रह्मांड ब्रम्हे पाथर्यु सुखकुंज सम ऊंडु,
त्यां एकलो ऊंडु.
जन जगत सूर्य सुहागी ज्योत्स्ना, विश्व बहु रुंडु,
पण एकलो ऊंडु.
बीड्यां प्रगटतां पिच्छ में, पडधो पडयो अहालेक,
सुण्युं साधुओजे भेख.
हिममाळकेरा शिखरशिखरे शब्द हुं ढूंडु,
ने एकलो ऊंडु.

41. नीलो कमलरंग वींझणों, हो नंदलाल !
रढियाळो रतनजडाव, मोरा नंदलाल !
ब्रह्मा वींझे ब्रह्मवींझणो हो नंदलाल !
सोनानो सूरज शोभतो हो नंदलाल !
रूपेरी चंदनी बिछाव, मोरा नंदलाल !
ब्रह्मा वींझे ब्रह्मवींझणो हो नंदलाल !

And imagining the Virata, the all-Pervading Being, swaying to and fro in a swing. Nanalal says:—

This dazzling swing of Virata,
Its ropes tied to the sky, its pole;
Triloka,⁴² the swing;

And Punya⁴³ and Papa,⁴⁴ its ropes
with tassels fluttering all around....⁴⁵

The poet is essentially a poet of love. Most of his poems and dramas have at their centre "Snehalagna" (Love-Marriage) and "Lagnasneha" (Love for the partner in marriage). He says:

Bright-hearted sons and daughters of love!
Don't you ever forget your family tradition:
All your auspiciousness
is centred in Snehalagna; and in
your Lagnasneha, your divine enjoyment!⁴⁶

Nanalal has given poems of devotion, some of which are exquisite:

O! the lethargy of my eyes! They did not
stare at Hari even for a while: They did not
fix themselves in an intent look even for a wink;
they did not please themselves even by a glimpse of
His.⁴⁷

Or

This Spring has blossomed with all its
hundred petals; come, O Hari!
The earth has dressed herself in her
loveliest and best; now do please come.
O Hari!⁴⁸

42. The three worlds: Heaven, Earth and Nether world.

43. Merit

44. Sin.

45. विराटनो हिंडोळो झाकमझोळ
के आभने मोभे बांध्या एना दोर. विराटनो०
पुण्य पाप दोर ने त्रिलोकनो हिंडोळो,
फरती फुमतडांनी फोर

46. ओ स्नेहनां हृदयउज्ज्वल पुत्रपुत्रि ।
मा भूलशो कदि तमे तम कुलघर्म;
संच्यु तमारं सह भद्र ज स्नेह लग्ने
ने लग्नस्नेहमहीं दिव्य विलासशोभा.

47. मारां नयणांनी आळस रे न, नीरव्या हरिने जरी;
एक मटकुं न मार्यु रे, न ठरियां झांखी करी.

48. आ वसंत खीली शतपांखडी, हरि आवो ने
आ धरतीए धर्या सोहाग, हवे तो हरि आवोने.

The poet has given some songs of patriotism, of which his song on Gujarati. "Blessed, thrice blessed is our holy land, our worthy Gurjara Desh"⁴⁹ is noteworthy.

The best of Nanalal's lyrics are written either in metres inherited from classical Sanskrit or in melodies borrowed from the folk-songs or songs sung by Gujarati women on special occasions. They are, couched in the sweetest and the loveliest language. They are remarkable for their opening lines and suggestivity.

Not all Nanalal's lyrics are, of course, of a uniformly high level. Some of the lyrics are verbose; and some, obscure; the language of some of them is sometimes grammatically incorrect; and sometimes the metre or the rhythm is discordant.

Vasantotsava, a long narrative poem in Dolan Shaili had captured the mind and heart of literary Gujarat by its sentiments as well as by its novelty of style and diction. The poet himself was ambitious to be known as a poet of "Vasanta"—the Spring, at the earlier stages of his career. This Spring was the spring

that had set in in India after contact with the Western Civilization. Nanalal hoped to do through poetry what Govardhanram did through prose, viz. to discard the dead weight of the Past and rejuvenate the Indian way of life by supplementing it, where necessary, with the best of the West. *Vasantotsava* is an attempt in that direction. It extols love-marriage and recommends remarriage of a widow if she had not married out of love but was given away in marriage by her parents to a stranger to her heart. One of the characters, obviously a mouth-piece of the poet, says:

There is no sin like re-marriage
to a widow who married out of love;
There is no salvation like love-marriage,
for a widow who married only bodily.⁵⁰

The plot of the story narrated in the poem is extremely thin and improbable; and the practice of the characters is contrary to what they preach.

In *Chitradarshano*, the poet is not always at his best. But there are some beautiful descriptions of nature as in poems like

49. धन्य हो धन्य ज पुण्य प्रदेश,
अमारो गुणियल गुर्जर देश

50. प्रेमलग्ननी विधवाने
पुनर्लग्न समुं पाप नथी;
देहलग्ननी विधवाने
प्रेमलग्न समी मुक्ति नथी

Sharat Poornima and *Chorvad*. The poems addressed to particular persons, e.g. *Pitritarpan* (Parents) *Gurudeva-ne* (Guru Prof. Kashiram Dave), *Saurashtra-no Sadhu* (Amritlal Padhiar, a true man of God), *Gujarat-no Tapasvi* (Mahatma Gandhi) are particularly noteworthy for their warmth of emotions and rhetoric. As a poet's tribute to those whom the poet holds in high esteem, these poems have few parallels in Gujarati literature. It must be noted in passing, however, that *Gujarat-no Tapasvi*, perhaps, the best of the lot, has been cancelled by the poet after his parting with Gandhiji.

The other poems in *Chitradarshano* are not as fully satisfying as the poems noted above.

Kurukshetra is a narration of several incidents of the war of Mahabharata. The poet calls it a mahakavya, an epic. But, in spite of the majesty of diction and rhetoric, which are so characteristic of Nanalal, at several places, the work lacks in unity both of construction and vision, Nanalal's genius being essentially the genius of a lyricist and a subjective poet.

Hari-Samhita (1942-1946) is an ambitious attempt at writing a great poem of the type of *Bhagavata*; but the poet is largely repeating himself here in sentiment, style and diction.

LYRICAL DRAMAS

Indukumar: It is a drama in three parts. It delineates the *Vasanta-Dharma*, the characteristics of the Spring, so dear to the poet's heart, and it lays down the ideals of love and patriotism. The plot is very thin and incongruous in the extreme.

The hero of the play Indukumar and the heroine Kantikumari live in a town named Amritpur. Indukumar, the son of a very rich father and Kantikumari are friends since their childhood. Their friendship having blossomed into love, they decide to marry and set before the world an example of ideal love marriage. But owing to some unforeseen circumstances Indu's family gets disintegrated and Indu leaves Amritpur. Kanti assures him that as long as she were unmarried, she would maintain a stall where she would distribute free of charge flowers to anyone who asked for them.

After leaving Amritpur, Indukumar happens to meet a Guru who asks him to remain incognito for a year and observe the world quietly and with an open mind. If at the end of the year he felt that his urge to renounce the world was as powerful as ever, then he should listen to the call from within. If on the other hand, at the end of the year, he felt irresistibly drawn towards the world, he should return to the world. At this, Indukumar returns to Amritpur, goes every evening incognito to Kantikumari's stall and, unnoticed by her, has a glimpse of her.

The parents of Kanti insist on marrying Kanti to a man of their choice. Kanti, on the other hand, nurses her love by singing regularly at dusk a song inviting the lord of her heart to come. Seeing this restlessness of Kanti, Pramada, a woman given to sensuality, succeeds in leading her to the realm of merriment.

But Kanti soon recovers from her swoon. She leaves with Nepali Jogan, a great and noble lady, on a world tour.

After the departure of Kanti, Indukumar loses his taste for the world, puts on the habit of a yogi and dedicates himself to the service of humanity.

Not only has the poet made an excessive use of symbols in this play to convey his thoughts, he has tried to turn every character of the play into a symbol as well. But many of these symbols often lack consistency and propriety. There are incongruities in the construction of plot and often there is no relevance between what the characters preach and what they practise.

In *Jaya Jayant*, Jaya, the heroine, is the daughter of the king of Giridesh, an imaginary land in the Himalayas, the Mountain of the gods. It is a land where nights and days are six months long and dawns have a fortnight's duration. Jayant, her friend and the son of the King's minister proposes to her; but she, loathing marriage, does not accept the proposal. She runs away from home when her parents seek to force marriage upon her and give her away in marriage to Kashiraj, the king of Kashi.

At the instance of Jaya's parents, Jayant goes in search of her; and after a few vain efforts, settles down at a place which he calls "Hari-Kunj". He builds an ashrama there, practises severe self-mortification and devotes himself to the shaping of character and personality of his celebrate young disciples.

After leaving Giridesh, Jaya passes through some vicissitudes. Breaking open the dome of the temple of sin in which she was held, she jumps into the river Ganga. Jayant's disciples rescue her and take her to their Guru Jayant. There, after some discussion, both Jaya and Jayant decide to unite their souls in marriage, keep their bodies apart and untouched by each other, build their respective ashramas on either bank of the Ganga, and dedicate their lives to the cause of Dharma (moral and spiritual duty), and sneha (love) and seva (service).

Jaya Jayant, too, has the same inherent flaws in conception and execution as the other plays of Nanalal. Nanalal's disgust for the body has reached its utmost in this play. It not only renders him intolerant of physical love, but also of even a casual and unconscious physical touch. That is why he does not suffer

Jaya and Jayant sailing in the same boat or staying, albeit in separate ashramas, on the same bank of the river.

The plot of *Jaya Jayant* suffers from extreme incongruity. The ideal and the real, the super-natural and the natural are mixed up disproportionately. A scene where, at the behest of the Devarshi, the Past, the Present and the Future present themselves on the stage and give their own introduction, is very well written. But it is a piece of poetry; not an inherent part of the drama. As in *Indukumar*, here too there is no consistency between the behaviour of the characters and the sentiments they express. The play has been translated into English by Uchharangrai Keshavlal Oza.

The case is slightly different in *Shahanshah Akbarshah* and *Jehangir Noorjehan*, the two historical dramas dealing with the incidents in the life of two great Mogul emperors of India. Of the two dramas, *Jehangir Noorjehan* is better, because some incidents of Jehangir's life are in themselves more dramatic than the incidents of the life of Akbar. Two scenes in particular, viz. the justice of Jehangir and the pilgrimage to Sikandara are ably drawn.

Sanghamitra aims at propagating the royal command of non-violence of Emperor Ashoka; and *Rajarshi Bharat*, at portraying the glory and supremacy of the Indian (Arya) civilization.

Vishvagita is an attempt to solve the riddle of sin. It is a drama in three acts, each divided into several scenes. The first act emphasizes the existence of some five eternal problems correlated with sin. The second act deals with the attempts made since the dawn of civilization and culture to solve them; and the third act emphasises the values which are eternal. There is no plot as such in the drama. The plot of some scenes is borrowed from the *Ramayana*, of some from the *Mahabharata*, and of some from the *Bhagavata*. One scene is from the *Shankara Digvijaya*; while the rest of the scenes are invented by the poet himself. It is not the unity of plot but the unity of theme that is sought to run through the scenes and hold them together. But there being no logical connection between the problems posed in the first act and the solution attempted in the second, the drama fails to make a unity of impression. But some of the scenes like "*Bharat-Gotra-nan Lajjacheer*" and "*Brahmanda-Mandal no Maharasa*" are very well written.

Gopika is meant to be a pastoral play.

As noted earlier, Nanalal is essentially, a subjective poet and a lyricist. He excels in flashes; but does not feel quite at home in compositions which require consummate architectural skill.

PROSE

Of the prose works of Nanalal, *Usha* is a story of a poet turned lover. *Sarathi* is a novel in which the author discusses contemporary politics and prophecies that India will one day be the charioteer—leader—of the world. *Kavishvara Dalpatram*, in three parts, though full of extravagant exaggerations and betraying a total lack of balance in judging the subject, his father, is remarkable for some valuable information it provides about the life in Gujarat some time before and during the life time of Dalpatram.

Sansar-Manthan is a collection of lectures delivered on some social problems. *Apanan Sakshararatno* and *Sahitya Manthan* are collections of tributes paid by the author to some of the major poets and writers, lectures delivered at certain special literary gatherings, and an article on "Metre and Poetry". *Udbodhan* and *Ardha Shatabdina Anubhav bol* are also collections of lectures delivered by the author; the latter, in reply to the felicitations offered him at various places on the occasion of the celebration of his Golden Jubilee.

Most of the prose written by Nanalal consists of the lectures he delivered at special occasions. Nanalal hardly spoke extempore; and the lectures he read were results of much reading and hard work. His prose style is verbose, pompous and figurative. He is however, at his best in the prose essays included in *Chitradarshano*.

DOLAN SHAILI

Attempts to invent a metre that could serve as a vehicle to express the sublime and majestic actions and sentiments of an epic, as the blank verse does, were started from the days of Narmad. Narmad brought in the *Vira Vritta*. Nanalal found the *Dolan Shaili*, which his critics termed "Apadyagadya" (Neither verse, nor Prose).

Nanalal himself has said that the only element governing the *Dolan-Shaili* is "Dolan". This "Dolan" is not rhythm; nor is it accent. It is an exclusively subjective experience. X may not find Dolan where Y would find it; and Z would find it somewhere else, and all the three would be equally right or equally wrong.

Some of our competent scholars have tried to scan the lines written in the Dolan Shaili in order to find out if there were any specific law governing it. But no definite measure which could be codified has been noticed.

Dolan Shaili is not Free Verse either, though Nanalal claims it to be one. Free verse, though free, is verse all the same; while Dolan Shaili observes no versicular restrictions. It is noteworthy

that Ramnarayan Pathak, who once tried to scan the *Dolan Shaili* has not included it in his *Brihat-Pingal*.

It can, therefore, be said that *Dolan Shaili* is impassioned prose, where parts of a sentence, according to the part or unit of the meaning which each part conveys, are each given a separate line, and the word to be emphasized is usually placed first in the line.

Khabardar (1881-1953)

Ardesar Faramji Khabardar, who wrote under the pseudonyms Adal and Motalal, was born in Daman. He had not much of formal education; and he passed most of his active life in business.

The first collection of Khabardar's poems *Kavya-Rasika* was published in 1901. Since then he published over twenty books of poems, including *Bharat-no Tankar*, *Kalika*, *Bhajanika*, *Darshanika* and parodies *Prabhata-no Tapasvi* and *Kukkut-Diksha*. Khabardar has written some prose as well. He has written some lyrical verses in English also.

Khabardar's poems comprise of khandakavyas, sonnets, topical poems, poems of nature, love and devotion. Khabardar has also tried to create a sort of Gujarati blank verse by his "Muktadhara" and later on by "Mahachhand", what he sometimes called *Amiri* (Royal).

Of Khabardar's books *Kalika* and *Darshanika* are specially noteworthy.

Kalika (1926) is a long love poem of 373 stanzas in *Muktadhara*, the poet's attempted blank verse. Each stanza of the poem is a unit by itself; and there is no logical or psychological connection between the stanzas. Each stanza depicts a mood or an incident or is an eloquent expression of the poet's exuberant love. Some of the stanzas are remarkable specimens of love poetry.

Darshanika (1931) is composed in *Zulana*, the metre Narasimha Mehta used for his prabhatiyans and most of his poems of Jnana and Vairagya. The poem is divided into nine sections and it runs into some 6000 lines.

The poem is occasioned by the untimely death of Tahemina, the poet's daughter. It is, however, not an elegy, because there is no expression of personal grief in it. It contains, as the poet says, his complete philosophy of life. It is designed to be a synthesis of poetry, philosophy and science. No religion of the world is, according to the poet, perfect, as all religions are but different branches of one true religion—the universal religion of love, of the brotherhood of man. It is the poet's conviction that,

with the advancement of knowledge in all directions, mankind will be drawn more and more towards that religion of love.

The poem contains some beautiful images and the poet has been able, at places, to transform philosophy into poetry. But the poem often becomes argumentative; and because of its prolixity, nothing is left for the reader.

Khabardar's poems reflect the socio-political sentiments and styles of poetry that held the stage from time to time during his life. Khabardar is known particularly for his poems of patriotism. His poems *Gunavanti Gujarat*, *Khappar Bharo Bharo Ho*, *Amaro Desh*, *Haldighat-nun Yuddha*, *Shoora Bavis Hajar* are noted for their rhythm and forceful language. *Prabhat-no Tapasvi* is a parody of Nanalal's *Gujarat-no Tapasvi* and *Kukkuta Diksha*, a parody of his *Brahma Diksha*. Khabardar wrote these parodies under the pseudonym of "Motalal", which itself is a parody of the name "Nanalal".⁵¹

Of some of the most memorable lines written by Khabardar, the line "Wherever settles a Gujarati, it is Gujarat all the time"⁵² is widely known.

Of the other writers of the period mention must be made of the following:—

Narayan Hemchandra (1855-1909)

Narayan Hemchandra was a man with insatiable travel lust, and an urge to learn languages. He is the first writer to introduce Bengali literature to Gujarati readers by his translations of many Bengali books. The translations are haphazard, inaccurate and crude.

Shivlal Dhaneshvar (1850-1899)

Shivalal Dhaneshvar is noted for his translation of the *Ramayana* (1875) and the *Meghaduta* (1886); as well as for his *Pravasa Varnan*, (1886). The *Ramayana* is an excellent translation of the *Ramayana* of Tulsidasji, which brought great fame to Shivlal. His translation of the *Meghaduta* is not done in *Mandakranta*, the metre in which the Sanskrit poem is composed; of the metres used in his translation by Shivlal, Prithvi and Sragdhara also are made use of. *Pravasa Varnan* is an account of the poet's travels from Cutch to Mahabaleshvar. Some of the descriptions of towns and places are extremely beautiful.

Keshavlal Motilal Parikh (1853-1907)

Keshavlal started in 1907, a monthly periodical "The Message

51. Mota means big; Nana means small.

52. ज्यां ज्यां वसे एक गुजराती त्यां त्यां सदाकाळ गुजरात

of Native Industry"⁵³ and championed the cause of native art and crafts, and industrial enterprises. Keshavlal has also written on social reform.

Keshavlal has contributed some stories to *Gujarat and Kathiawad Deshni Vartao*, the anthology published by Dalpatram with the help of Forbes. As noted by Dahyabhai Derasari, in his *Sathi-na Sahitya-nun Digdarshan*, several stories published in the collection of Framji Bomanji were written by Keshavlal.

Harilal Narasimharam Vyas (1863-?)

Vyas is known for his translations of Sanskrit Classics, *Bhagavad Gita*, *Ashtavakra Gita*, *Raghuvamsha*, *Kiratarjuniya* and *Shishupala Vadha*. His translation activity covers the period 1892 to 1910. The last three, viz. the *Raghuvamsha*, *Kiratarjuniya* and *Shishupala Vadha*, are, probably, the first translations of these works in Gujarati.

Jhaverilal Umiyashankar Yajnik

Yajnik was the first writer to translate *Abhijnana Shakuntala* of Kalidasa, in Gujarati in 1867.

Chhaganlal Harilal Pandya

Chhaganlal Harilal Pandya is known for his translation of *Kadambari* (1882).

Shri Krishna Sharma

Sharma is known for his *Shri Madhupa Doota Kavya* (1888) the first poem in Gujarati, written in imitation of the *Meghaduta* of Kalidasa. It is a poem in twelve cantos, in which the hero sends with a bee a message to his beloved who has gone to her parent's place. The only importance of the poem is historical.

Bai Aster Khimchand

Aster is the only lady and the only poet to describe in her *Sadbodha Kavya* (1895), a Barmasi, the beauty of the months, according to the Gregorian calendar i.e. January, February, March and so on. The title of the poem is "Ishvi (of Jesus) Varshana Bar Mahina." The poem is quite readable.

Bhimrao Bholanath Divetia (1851-1890)

Bhimrao is noted for his *Prithuraja Rasa* (1897), an attempted epic; and his translation—the first one in identical metre in Gujarati—of the *Meghaduta* of Kalidasa. Some of Bhimrao's descriptions in *Prithuraja Rasa* are extremely lovely.

Keshavlal Hariram Bhatt (1851-1896)

Keshavlal is known for some of the bhajans of his *Keshava Kirti* (1909, second edition) marked by utmost humility, nobility

53. स्वदेशी उद्योगनो संदेश

of thought and chastity of diction. His compositions are metrically perfect.

Behramji Meharwanji Malabari (1853-1912)

Malabari was distinguished as a journalist and a great social worker. He was held in so high an esteem that at his sudden death in Simla, even the king Emperor had sent a message of condolence.⁵⁴ As a poet, Malabari is known for some of his most memorable poems of social reform, like *Itihas-ni Arasi*, *Surati Lala Sahelani*, *Sun Garvi Gujarat*, etc. and particularly for his lines:

Even the omnipotent monarchs are tied to the wheel of time. I have seen the kith of Shah Alam⁵⁵ roaming in the streets with begging bowls in their hands.⁵⁶

Dolatram Kriparam Pandya (1854-1916)

Pandya is known for his *Indrajit Vadha*, (1887), an attempted epic.

Harilal Harshadrai Dhruva (1856-1896)

Harilal is one who, for the first time in Gujarati, worked out in his poetry a unique synthesis resulting from the ancient Sanskrit and modern Western education. As Sundaram observes, "Harilal is the first poet so far whose poetry is, more than anyone else's poetry, favourably inclined towards the modern influences." Harilal is distinguished for his poems of nature and patriotism. He is known also for historical research.

54. "It will perhaps surprise my readers that Malabari, in spite of his general support of the principles and policy of the Government, did not escape suspicion. In 1898 he published a series of Gujarati poems under the title of "Sansarika" The Book was pronounced by the Director of Public Instruction to be seditious and his printing office was visited by the police. The matter was hotly discussed for months, and the Government of Bombay exonerated the poet from all ill will towards itself. Lords Northbrook, Ripon and Reay in the House of Lords testified to Malabari's steadfast loyalty. He himself did not care to make much of this unpleasant incident..... The matter was finally allowed to drop..... In "Sansarika" Malabari had merely preached his gospel of social reform. He exhorted his people to be up and doing and his words were misinterpreted to mean what he never meant them to convey." (pp. 60-61 *B. M. Malabari*, by Sirdar Jogendra Singh—quoted by K. M. Jhaveri, *Further Milestones in Gujarati Literature*, 2nd edition, 1956, pp. 138 f.).

55. An emperor of India.

56. चक्रवर्ति महाराज चालिया काळचक्री फेरीए,
सगां दीठां में शाह आलमनां भीख मागतां शेरीए

Dahyabhai Pitambardas Derasari (1857-1937)

Dahyabhai is noted for his *Bulbul*, (1890, second edition), a love poem noted for its rapture and form; as well as for the *Sathi-na Sahitya-nun Digdarshan* (sixty years of Gujarati literature) giving an outline of the development of Gujarati literature during the years 1848 to 1908—the year 1848 being the year of foundation of the Gujarat Vernacular Society, a symbol of Renaissance in Gujarat. Dahyabhai has also edited the *Kanhad de Prabandha* of Padmnabha.

Tribhuvan Premshankar (1865-1923)

Tribhuvan Premshankar, known also as Masta Kavi, is noted for his *Vibhavari Svapna*, (1894) a reflective love poem, and for *Kalapi-no Viraha* (1913), an elegy on the death of Kalapi.

Moolshankar Harinand Moolani (1868-1957)

Moolani a dramatist, brought for the first time in Gujarat, authentic Gujarati language, authentic Gujarati manners and customs, and authentic Gujarati way of life in his *Raj-Bij* (C.1888). Before Moolani's arrival, female characters⁵⁷ on the stage, put on Maharashtrian dress, spoke prose in Gujarati and sang songs in Hindi.

Moolani has written some 30 dramas, all successfully staged, including the *Saubhagya Sundari*, a unique and unprecedented success, a drama which made one of the greatest ever actors on the Gujarati stage, Jayshankar, who played the role of the heroine, known throughout the rest of his life, and a fairly long life at that, as 'Sundari', (a beautiful young lady).

Of all the dramas of Moolani, only one drama, the *Deva Kanya* has been published in 1909.

Chhotalal Jivanram Master (1862-1912)

Chhotalal Jivanram Master, "Vishvavandya", known largely as Master Saheb, was a leading disciple of Shri Nrisimhacharyaji, the founder of the "Shreyah Sadhaka Adhikari Varga", which aimed at proving the supremacy of Indian Philosophy and explaining in a rational way the mysteries of yoga. Vishvavandya has written a novel, *Yogini Kumari*, and numerous articles in *Mahakala*, the monthly organ of the Varga. These articles have been collected in the two parts of *Vishvavandya Kiranvali* and in the *Vichara Ratna Rashi*. In those articles the author has shown how man can lead a highly spiritual life while attending to his day to day affairs of the world. Like Govardhanram and Anandshankar, Vishvavandya too expounds the meaning of religious and philosophical terms in the context of practical life. Vishvavandya's prose is simple, chaste and dignified.

57. The role was played by boys.

Maganlal Narottamdas Patel

Patel is known for his *Mahajan Mandal* (1896), a Who's Who of India's men and women of distinction, running into 1420 pages. The volume covers ancient and modern kings, statesmen, saints, religious leaders and philosophers, scholars, poets and patriots, musicians, vaidyas and doctors and ladies of great virtue, great valour and great scholarship.

Raichandbhai Ravjibhai Mehta (1868-1901)

Raichandbhai is best known as Shrimad Rajachandra. He was a realized soul. Gandhiji says, he has derived more from the life of Raichandbhai than from the life of anyone else. Rajachandra's goal was self-realization, and literature, to him, was but a means to that end. Yet his poetry and prose writings show a high degree of literary excellence. His poem beginning with the lines:

When will dawn the day unique? O! when shall we be released from the bonds, external and internal?⁵⁸ is among the best of its type; and his prose marks the author's intimate tete-a-tete with himself. It is simple, direct, colloquial and to the point.

Krishnalal Mohanlal Jhaveri (1868-1957)

Jhaveri, the author of *Milestones in Gujarati Literature* (1914) and *Further Milestones in Gujarati Literature* (1924) is the first writer to write in English, a History of Gujarati Literature.

Narbheshankar Pranjivan Dave (1871-1952)

Dave who wrote under the pseudonym "Kathiawadi", is known for his translations of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, *Othello*, *Measure for Measure*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *All's Well That Ends Well* and *Hamlet*.

Narmadashankar Devshankar Mehta (1871-1939)

Narmadashankar was a great student of philosophy and religion. His writings are marked by thorough and intensive study, clarity of thought, strictly scientific and objective approach and lucid style. His *History of Indian Philosophy*⁵⁹ is a monumental work which, in the opinion of some authorities, maintains the historical sequence of the *Darshanas* of Indian Philosophy more correctly than Dr. Dasgupta and Dr. Radhakrishnan; and notes some historical facts that other scholars have failed to do. Narmadashankar's study of the Shakta Sect has remained unsurpassed to this day.

58. अपूर्व अवसर एवो क्यारे आवशे ?

क्यारे थइशुं बाह्यान्तर निर्ग्रथ जो ।

59. हिंद तत्वज्ञाननो इतिहास

Bhogindraro Ratanlal Divetia (1875-1917)

Bhogindraro is known for his social novels *Ushakant*, *Assistant Collector*, *Solicitor* etc. His novels are mostly adaptations and they deal with contemporary social and national problems. Before the arrival of Kanaiyalal Munshi and Ramanlal Desai Bhogindraro was one of those novelists who sustained the interest of Gujarati readers in the post Govardhanram years. Bhogindraro is probably the first writer to introduce Tolstoy to Gujarat by translating some of his stories. His *Ajamul*, which was left incomplete because of his death, was completed by Tarachandra Popatlal Adalja, another novelist.

This novel had a profound impact upon, among many others, Prahlad Parekh, a sensitive poet of the Gandhian Era.

Himmatlal Ganeshji Anjaria (1877-1972)

Anjaria was the first lover of poetry to compile *Kavya-Madhurya* (1903), an anthology of poems of the Pandit Yuga and to initiate a whole generation of lovers of poetry to the charm of the Muse. Anjaria also wrote a primer of Gujarati literature,⁶⁰ and at a later stage compiled *Kavya Saurabha*, an anthology of representative poems of the Gandhian Era.

Vadilal Motilal Shah (1878-1931)

Vadilal was one of the most original thinkers, noted for his frankness and fearlessness, who, though a Jain, boldly criticised doctrines dear to the Jains. He was a great student of Jainism and Vedanta. He was influenced by the thoughts of Nietzsche and Schopenhauer. He showed to the world, entangled wilfully in its own cobweb of sham, superstition and uncritical conformity, the way to turn inwards and increase will power by bringing under control the waywardness of mind. This he has done with the help of numerous anecdotes, illustrations, idioms and proverbs. Vadilal is often bitter, sarcastic and ironical. Extremely sincere and earnest, he is one of the noted prose writers of Gujarat. His books include, among others, *Sudarshana* (a novel), *Masta Vilas*, *Nagna Satya*, *Pragati-nan Padachihno*, *Mrityu-no-Mhoman*.

Ranjitram Vavabhai Mehta (1882-1917)

Ranjitram was an essayist and a student of history and folk-lore of Gujarat. His enthusiasm to reinstate the culture and literature of Gujarat in national life knew no bounds. He was the founder of Gujarat Sahitya Sabha, Ahmedabad and of the Gujarati Sahitya Parishad (Literary Conference) (1905). Writers like Kanaiyalal Munshi, in the initial stages of their career, approached him for guidance and approbation.

60. साहित्य प्रवेशिका

CHAPTER X
20TH CENTURY

(I)

GANDHIAN ERA (1915-1945)

The age of Goverdhanram or the Pandit Yuga came to an end in 1914, when the First World War (1914-1918) broke out. As a result of the war, the map of the world was redrawn. England, with whom the destiny of India was then inextricably linked, saw the end of the Victorian Era; and the revolution in Russia brought hope to mankind of a world free from exploitation and inequality. Man's view of woman, society, State and religion suffered a sea-change and the old was rung out.

The year 1914 turned out to be a year of great moment for Gujarati literature as well. The last remarkable works of the departing Era—*Rai-no Pārvat*, *Jaya Jayant* and *Smaran Samhita* were published in that year. And Mahatma Gandhi, with his weapon of Satyagraha (Friendly passive resistance) tried and tested in South Africa, left Africa for good to settle down in India. Gandhiji arrived in India in early January 1915. With penetrating insight he observed first hand the socio-economic and political conditions obtaining in India and thought about every question related to life. His was a heart of a missionary; and inspired by Ruskin's *Unto This Last* he dreamt of *Sarvodaya* (rise and prosperity of every section of society). He dedicated his life to freeing our Nation from the political, intellectual, economic and cultural bondage of the foreign Power.

In 1919 the massacre of Jallianwalla Bagh in the Punjab, sparked off the movement of civil disobedience. There was nothing new or unique in the programme that Gandhiji gave. In fact, each one of the programmes that Gandhiji gave was given by some one or the other at some time somewhere during the period of political awakening, social consciousness and cultural renaissance since the days of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833). But Gandhiji was the first leader to realize, more than any one else, that India was not just a few cities like Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, or Delhi, but was its seven lakh (7,00,000) villages; and India would awake and arise only when its seven hundred thousand villages shook off their stupor.

Hundreds of young idealists who were drawn towards Gandhiji repaired at his behest to the villages. We then for the first time realized for ourselves how vast our country was. Our contact with the reality of life became more live. Our writer came out of his ivory tower and turned towards the lowly and the lost.

After Gandhiji's arrival on the Indian scene, the literary climate of Gujarat—which was the hub of all Gandhiji's socio-political activities—underwent a rapid change. On one side, there was *Navajivan*, a weekly periodical edited by Gandhiji, spreading far and wide Gandhian thoughts and ideology. On the other, there was *Saurashtra*, a powerful weekly edited by Amritlal Sheth with Jhaverchand Meghani and other dedicated youths as his collaborators, exposing the autocracy, tyranny and corruption of the native States and inspiring people to acts of courage, heroism and sacrifice by its series of publications of folklore, history, biographies of leaders of revolutionary thoughts and world revolutions. On the third side, there was *Gujarat*, a monthly periodical of Kanaiyalal Munshi, which aimed at restoring the self-esteem of Gujarat. This period saw the celebrations of the birth and death anniversaries of leading men of letters; cultural festivals of spring and autumn; *dayaras* (gatherings) for enjoyment of folk-literature, exhibitions of paintings and sculptures, and the birth of the amateur theatre.

The writer of this period continued to correlate like his counterpart of the preceding era, literature with life; and for a large majority of front rank writers, the function of literature was to entertain and ennoble the human soul. But the writer of the Gandhian Era, unlike his predecessor, tried as best as he could to reach the masses. The odd situation created by the economic inequity made him feel uneasy. He could not bear to see the lot of the poor, the exploited and the underdog. Being inspired by Gandhiji's activities in the fields of the service of the poor, village uplift, and eradication of untouchability, he wrote about the unsophisticated rural folk of the lower strata instead of the rich or the educated of the upper strata of society. It sometimes happened that instead of giving a realistic picture of the village, the writer projected his pre-conceived notions into the life of the village and spoke of the village as it ought to be, rather than as it actually was. Consequently, the picture he gave of the village life was sometimes more romantic than real.

To the writer of the Gandhian Era, as it was to his predecessor, life was serious and earnest. One, therefore, comes across serious reflection on life in his writings.

In the sphere of creative prose, in novels and short stories for instance, the writer concerned himself, more than his predecessor, with making his works interesting and readable to as

large a number of readers as possible. Therefore, the novels written during this period differ considerably from the novels of the preceding era in plot, execution and style. Short story as an independent form of literature can be said to have been born in this period. Similarly, the light essays, one-act plays, monologues, diaries, letters, etc. are also the product of this period. Because of the new found interest in villages and their people, indifference towards their life and culture came to an end; and this gave an impetus to revival of interest in folk-literature. Writers like Jhaverchand Meghani engaged themselves in the research and publication of this literature which was passed from generation to generation orally and no one knew how much of it was already lost. Similarly, literature for children and literature on subjects like sciences, economics, psychology, psycho-analysis, education, agriculture etc. too developed during this period.

The literature of the previous age was complex in style and was meant, in the ultimate analysis, for the elite. In the Gandhian Era, largely due to the exigencies of the day, prose style became simple, direct and concise, shorn of all artificiality, verbosity, exaggeration and ornament.

In poetry also forms like *ras*, sonnet, *khandakavya*, lyric, elegy, dialogues in verse, *padyanataka* (verse-drama), *muktaka*, parody etc. were either developed or born. There, too, satirical poems written in the style of mediaeval *akhyana*, are a feature of this period. During the days of the Satyagraha movements, —particularly during the nineteen forties when England was struggling for its survival, during the Second World War (1939-1945), and India with its acknowledged leaders behind the bars was governed largely by ordinances and when the Press was virtually gagged, these poems exposed the hypocrisy of the British and the mean self-serving nature of their henchmen.

The poet of the Gandhian Era did sing, as all poets everywhere do, about love, nature and God. But he also tried to face squarely the reality. Instead of aspiring to be a Messiah or a Prophet, he considered it enough if he, a man, could be but a man. In those days of great national awakening, even when he, in the most appropriate response to the call of duty, went to jail, he sang with full-throated ease the songs of universal love and universal peace. To him, his true happiness consisted in sacrificing his all for the sake of peace and happiness of others; and death, to him, was a mother's lap. He realized that ugliness, pathos and terror had as much a place in the scheme of things as joy and beauty had.

Till 1914, it was felt that only the beautiful, the lofty or the sublime—the cloud, the moon, the stars, the lotus, the cuckoo, the

sea, the mountains for instance—were subjects worthy of poetry. But the poet of the Gandhian Era, partly as a reaction to this and partly as a result of the enlargement of his area of consciousness and sympathy wrote on a scavenger girl, a latrine fly, a garbage dump, a dried up mango-stone, as well. In lesser hands, it became an obsession; and to some of them, the depiction of the ugly, the repulsive and the obscene—both in prose and verse came to mean a hall mark of literature. Such aberrations apart, the scope of poetry enlarged in the Gandhian Era; and it was realized that poetry lay not in the greatness or majesty of a subject, but in the poet's eye and in his approach towards it. Love lost some of its ethereal romanticism; the beloved ceased to be an angel and became a companion; intoxicating descriptions of the beauty of women's limbs became rare; taste became more refined. In the preceding era, man was often contrasted with nature; nature was free, beautiful and happy; while man was everywhere in chains and miserable. The discordance of his life marred the harmonious music of the universe. The poet of the Gandhian Era got himself rid of this belief; and considered man, not as an entity independent of nature, but as a part of the universal whole. As Sundaram has done in his *Kavya-Pranash* (the Destruction of Poetry), man's conventional notions about the happy happy trees and brooks and birds were even subjected to a screening process and nature was found to be red in tooth and claw.

The outlook of the poet of the Gandhian Era towards God concurred with the outlook of his predecessor of the Pandit Yuga. God was looked upon as "Satya" (the Truth), "Shiva" (the Good) and "Sundara" (the Beautiful) who should be approached not for any material favours but for the strength to withstand temptations and stick to the right path. But the socio-economic inequity perpetuated for ages in the name of God sometimes made the poet doubt the very existence of God; and God, as a creature of powerful vested interests was made fun of in poems like the "Jaya Jaganath" (Hail to Thee, Lord of the Universe!) of Karsandas Manek and some of the poems of *Koya Bhagatni Kadvi Vani* of Sundaram.

The nationalism of the Gandhian Era differed in two ways from the nationalism of the preceding Pandit Yuga: First, the Gandhian Era gradually came to realize that it is not in the interest of India to co-operate with the British; India's best interests lie in getting free from the yoke of foreign domination. Secondly, the nationalism of the Gandhian Era became co-extensive with humanism and universal brotherhood.

This is to say, the nationalism of the poetry of the Gandhian Era is based on internationalism. It has, of course, developed

with the development of political thought of the nation. The nationalism of the poetry of the Gandhian Era is different from the nationalism of the poetry of the Pandit Yuga inasmuch as the political thought of the one is different from the political thought of the other. This is not unusual for a subjugated people during the period of their political awakening and struggle for freedom. But it has to be noted that our nationalism has never tried to incite hatred towards the opponent. Nor has it played upon the distinctions of class, colour or culture.

Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948)

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi—known all over the world as Mahatma Gandhi—was born in Porbandar, Saurashtra. To him writing was just a means; and never an end in itself. And while expressing his views, it was not Gujarat alone, but the whole country that he had before his eyes. Yet the impact that he made on the thought and expression of Gujarat, has hardly ever been matched by any literary man or political or religious leader. It was under the influence of Gandhiji that we came into our own, turned to millions of our brothers and sisters whom we had long ignored and held in high esteem the ideals of truth, non-violence, universal brotherhood and *Sarvodaya*.

Gandhiji has written in three languages: Gujarati, English and Hindustani. His writings comprise his autobiography, and hundreds of articles and letters, which are being made available to English-speaking readers under the title *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* and to Gujarati readers under the title: *Gandhiji-no Akshara Deha*.

Of these writings, his *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiment with Truth*¹ was originally written in Gujarati. This is specially noteworthy, so far as Gujarati literature is concerned. It was serialized in the *Navajivan*, Gandhiji's weekly periodical. All the writings of Gandhiji have reached millions of readers through their translations into English and other major Indian languages.

Gandhiji's *Autobiography* narrates some of the experiments he made in his search for Truth, a synonym, according to him, of God.

1. सत्यना प्रयोगो अथवा आत्मकथा

The influence of the phenomenal powers of Gandhiji was best seen in the field of Indian politics. That power was not born of any extraordinary intellectual acumen or ability to manoeuvre things. It came from his moral and spiritual strength which was not accidental nor a freak of wayward nature. It was the result of a constant and ever-vigilant exercise of self-control. The field of this exercise is

not as much the external world as man's own mind and heart. This is why Gandhiji's experiments in that field are more interesting as a record of the struggle within than of the struggle without. As the autobiography of an earnest man of God and servant of man, it is one of the greatest autobiographies in world literature.

Gandhiji's *Dakshin Africa-na Satyagraha-no Itihas* is also a kind of autobiography. Gandhiji has recalled in it the movement in which his weapon of "Satyagraha" was used for the first time.

His numerous articles are written with a view to awaken the country primarily politically. But in them Gandhiji has expressed his views on every subject—religion, art, economics, sociology, education, politics, health etc.—related to life. He had a vision of the full integrated life.

By personal letters, Gandhiji has established and maintained contact with thousands of acquaintances and strangers in India and abroad. Being an extremely busy man—there are instances when he worked for twenty-three hours a day—the letters he wrote are naturally short and to the point. But these letters unmistakably show the range of Gandhiji's interests, his tact, moderation and sympathy, and his ability to draw out the very best of a man and put it to use in the service of the nation. By these letters not only has he directly interested himself in the lives of innumerable persons, brought them love, faith and hope, and revived their interest in a normal, healthy, useful life, he has also made innumerable persons interested in the lives of one another and made them belong to one large family.

Many of Gandhiji's writings are a model of simple, clear, lucid, direct and concise prose style, devoid of artificiality and exaggeration. By these writings he has inspired millions of his countrymen to fight slavery and injustice and directed them to a

2. Politics, however, was not Gandhiji's first love. In the formative years of his life, never do we see him interested in politics or aspiring for leadership. In England where he was studying law, he spent his spare time in propagation of Vegetarianism and religious discussions. His entry into politics in South Africa was quite accidental. See: Gandhiji's *Autobiography*: Translated by Mahadev Desai. Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad Popular Edition. 1927 Part I, chapter XVI, pages 100-101.

better and nobler life. In spite of the fact that he never consciously tried to create any art effect, his writings—his *Autobiography* and *Dakshin Africa-na Satyagbraha-no Itihas* in particular—are interspersed with beautiful similes, picturesque descriptions and live pen portraits; and they express his views on many basic and vital questions of life in a clear and cogent way.

Gandhiji's place among the leading writers of Gujarati would have been assured even if he had done this much and nothing more. But he has not stopped at this; he has done much more. He has impressed his thought and philosophy of life on most of his contemporaries, big and small. It is Gandhiji who by his words and actions propagated to the maximum extent the ideas of purity of ends and means, freedom, courage, equality and compassion, humanity, universal brotherhood and *Sarvodaya*. And almost all writers of the Gandhian Era, have depicted in one way or the other, any of these ideals. Even those who prided themselves in being indifferent to the purity or impurity of means and to whom the touchstone of man's cleverness was his ability to get things done by any means whatsoever, have paid eloquent tributes to these ideals in their works.

Damodar Khushaldas Botadkar (1870-1924)

Damodar Khushaldas Botadkar² is noted for his idealistic pictures of the beauty of the home and family life and the countryside. His poems are noted for metrical perfection.

Janmashankar Mahashankar Buch (1877-1947)

Known as Lalit, Janmashankar Mahashankar Buch is noted for some excellent lyrics like *Madhuli*, *Vijogan Vansaladi* and *Ekal Ram*. Lalit is the only poet to sing of the pangs of separation felt by Krishna's Flute and of the agony of loneliness felt by Rama in the absence of Sita.

Nrisimhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt (1882-1961)

Known largely as Nanabhai, Nrisimhaprasad was an educationist. Dakshinamoorti at Bhavnagar and later on the Gram Dakshinamoorti at Ambla, in Bhavnagar District, are monuments to Nanabhai's vision and philosophy of education. Nanabhai's *Ramayana-nan Patro*, and *Mahabharata-nan Patro* are interpretations of some of the greatest characters of the great Indian classics. They are written in a variety of styles, narration, dialogues, monologues etc. and are specimens of beautiful prose. Nanabhai's autobiography, *Ghadtar ane Chantar* lacks symmetry and continuity. But it is distinguished for the author's devotion to truth, honesty, steadfastness, sense of public duty, humanity, and frankness reminiscent in some cases of Gandhiji and Indulal Yajnik. Some of the pen-pictures like those of the

author's first wife Shiva lakshmi, his foster mother Chandu and his Guru Nathuram Sharma are very well drawn.

Kaka Kalelkar (1886)

Dattatreya Balakrishna Kalelkar—known as Kaka Kalelkar or simply Kakasaheb—was born and educated in Maharashtra; but most of his literary work is done in Gujarati.

After his first meeting with Gandhiji early in 1915 at Shantiniketan of the Poet Rabindranath Tagore, he lost faith in the terrorist movement, and joined Gandhiji when the latter established his Satyagraha ashrama a few months later at Ahmedabad. Since then he has dedicated his life to the service of the nation through education and literature.

Kakasaheb has written many books, the chief of which are: *Himalayano Pravas*, *Brahmadeshno Pravas*, *Poorva Africa-man*, *Loka Mata*, *Smaran-Yatra*, *Otarati Divalo*, *Jivan-no Anand*, *Jivan-Sanskriti*, *Jivan-Bharati*, *Jivan-Vikas*, and *Jivan-Vyavastha*.

Himalayano Pravas is an account of his travels across the Himalayas. After the Ganganath Vidyalyaya at Vadodara, where the young Kakasaheb was teaching, was closed down in 1911, for political reasons, he went to the Himalayas and covered on foot the four great places of pilgrimage—Jamanotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath and Badarinath—in forty days.

In 1919, Kakasaheb started contributing by instalments to a manuscript magazine of the students of the Gujarat Vidyapith, where he was teaching, an account of these travels which he took seven years ago. The series took fifteen years to complete. Though written in instalments over an unusually long period of time, *Himalayano Pravas* is a unique account, unsurpassed in beauty and power of description, narration and vision. *Brahmadeshno Pravas* is an interesting account of the author's travels to Burma. *Poorva Africa-man* is an account of Kakasaheb's travels of East Africa. It lacks much of the buoyancy, ardour, freshness and poetry of the *Himalayano Pravas*, though some of the similes and descriptions bear the unmistakable stamp of Kakasaheb's genius. *Loka-Mata* describes in excellent prose the historical and cultural greatness and grandeur of some of the great rivers of India. *Smaran-Yatra* is a collection of memoirs of the childhood and adolescence of the author, written in an exceedingly lively style. *Otarati Divalo* is an interesting account of the author's experiences in a jail, where he was thrown in as a Satyagrahi. It is remarkable for the author's power of observation and resourcefulness. *Jivan-no Anand*, *Jivan-Sanskriti*, *Jivan-Bharati*, *Jivan-Vikas* and *Jivan-Vyavastha* are collections of Kakasaheb's essays and articles. Of these, *Anand* deals with the beauty of art and nature; *Sanskriti*, with culture and civiliza-

tion; *Bharati*, with arts and literature, *Vikas* with education and *Vyavastha*, with religion and allied subjects.

In all these books, in fact in all his books, it is a patriot, a poet, a scholar, a lover of nature, a teacher, and a man of refined taste and culture, with sparkling wit and a sense of humour, all in one, who is at work. Kakasaheb's aesthetic taste is formed by the Masters of Sanskrit and English literatures and the Saint poets of Maharashtra. He has an uncanny eye for beauty and his range of sympathy and understanding is very wide.

Besides his *Himalayano Pravas*, a masterpiece, Kakasaheb's greatest contribution to Gujarati literature is his light essays of *Jivan-no Anand* and *Jivan-Lila*, in particular. In these essays, the author initiates the reader into the mystery of beauty, which, not seldom, lies hidden in the humdrum and the commonplace, like the footprints on sand on the sea-shore or the stones and boulders on a hill or the tropical noon or mud. They make the reader share the unadulterated joy that the sea and the sky, the rivers, the mountains and the stars gave the author. They epitomize the free play of imagination of a cultured and civilized patriot.

Kakasaheb's reflective essays on religion, philosophy, art, literature, education, history, politics etc., have, like those of Gandhiji, life at their centre. Like Gandhiji Kakasaheb has no stomach for academic discussion. With practical end in view he considers how these could be utilized to enrich the everyday life of man. The principles they enunciate are, therefore, sometimes controversial. And being written at different times over a number of years on different occasions, some of the statements are contradictory. They also suffer from repetitions.

Kakasaheb's prose is a landmark in Gujarati literature. It is the prose of a man of taste and learning, a practical idealist, a poet and a humorist. Creating lovely images and pen pictures, transporting readers to the realm of the classics by allusions framed with appropriate Sanskrit and colloquial words and phrases and steeped in noble human sentiments, Kakasaheb's chaste, lucid and colourful prose often reaching the level of poetry sometimes stimulates the imagination, sometimes stirs the deepest emotions, and sometimes scales the highest peaks of thought.

K. M. Munshi (1887-1971)

Kanaiyalal Maneklal Munshi, who started writing under the *nom de plume* of Ghanashyam, was born in Bharuch. Starting his career as a junior advocate in Bombay, he rose to hold some of the highest positions in the cultural, literary and political life of the country.

By 1915, when Gandhiji returned from South Africa, Munshi had already commenced his literary and socio-political activities.

He worked as co-editor of *Navajivan* and *Saiya* in Gujarati and *Young India* in English, both of which later on passed on to Gandhiji, and under the editorship of Gandhiji, became the voice of the nation. After the death of Haji Mohamed Alarakhiya Shivji who, in order to bring into Gujarati a pictorial magazine like the *Strand*, started *Vismi Sadi*, a monthly periodical, and brought to light authors like Munshi and Dhoomaketu and

~~the magazine Vismi Sadi could not longer be published. Munshi started Gujarati~~
a monthly periodical. He also started in Bombay Gujarati Sahitya Samsad to promote literary and cultural activities. He ran for some time *Social Welfare*, an English weekly devoted to social problems. Towards the closing years of his life, he founded the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan with its branches in some important cities of India and in London, with a view to revive largely through the publications of the Bhavan's Book University, the cultural heritage of ancient India.

Since 1913-14, when Munshi's first novel *Ver-ni Vasulat* started getting serialized in *The Gujarati*, an influential Bombay Weekly edited by Manilal Ichchharam Desai, Munshi attracted the attention of Gujarati reading public. Since then, till the very end of his life he held the stage.

Munshi has written novels, short stories, plays and farces, pen portraits, biographies and autobiography, and articles on literary criticism and research. He has also written in English *Gujarat and Its Literature* and an account of his travels to Europe.

The novels of Munshi comprise historical novels like *Patan-ni Prabhuta*, *Gujarat-no Nath*, *Rajadhiraj*, *Prithivi Vallabh*, *Jaya Somanath*; Puranic novels like *Lomaharshini*, *Bhagavan Parashuram* and *Krishnavatara* in seven parts, which has remained incomplete; and social novels like *Ver-ni Vasulat*, *Swapnadrashita* and *Kono Vank* and *Tapasvini* in three parts. *Mari Kamala ane Biji Vato* is a collection of his short stories.

Munshi's plays comprise Puranic plays like *Pauranik Natako*, and *Lopamudra*, social plays among others, like *Kaka-ni Shashi*, *Brahmacharyashrama*, and *Pidagrasta Professor*, and a historical play *Dhruvasvamini Devi*.

Munshi's essays have been collected in three volumes: *Ketalak Lekho*, *Thodank Rasa Darshano—Sahitya-nan ane Bhakti-nan*, and *Adi-Vachhano*. He has written two biographies: *Narmad—Arvachino-man Adya* and *Narasaiyo—Bhakta Hari-no*. His autobiography in four volumes consists of *Adadhe Raste*, *Sidhan Chadan*, *Madhvananya* and *Swapna Siddhi-ni Shodhman*. *Mari Bin-Javabdar Kahani* is his account of travels.

In spite of these manifold literary activities, Munshi is best known as a novelist.

The fourth and the last part of Govardhanram's *Sarasvatichandra* was published in 1901. At that time *Ganga—Ek Gurjar Varta* by Ichchharam Suryaram Desai, *Gujarat-ni Juni Varta* by Chunilal Vardhaman Shah, *Prithviraj Chauhan ane Chanda Baradayi* by Manilal Chhabaram Bhatt, *Padmni* by Narayan Vasanji Thakkur and *Vikram-ni Vismi Sadi* by Motilal Tribhuvandas Sattawala had already been published; and popular novels like *Ushakant* and *Assistant Collector* by Bhogindras Ratanlal Divetia, and *M. A. Banake Kyon Meri Mitti Kharab Ki?* by Amrit Keshav Nayak were published during the *Post-Sarasvatichandra* years. But none of these novels could replace *Sarasvatichandra*; nor could they break any new ground.

New ground was broken by Munshi when he came in 1913-14. with new plot, new characters, new dialogues, and new glamour. As he himself has said, his aim in writing novels was to tell an interesting story, by means of living characters, dramatic incidents, and dialogues. He was not concerned with the question of morality or immorality; and he wrote his novels accordingly.

It came to be known at a much later date that those elements in the *Ver-ni Vasulat* and Munshi's earlier novels that had dazzled the eyes of Gujarat had been borrowed from Alexandre Dumas. But those elements were, at that time, new and different; and they kept Gujarat spell-bound for the time.

Soon after *Kono Vank*, Munshi's *Patan-ni Prabhuta*, his first historical novel eulogizing the glory of the Solanki period in Gujarat was published. The publication of *Gujarat-no Nath*, a continuation of it, took Munshi to his zenith; and Narasimharao, a discerning critic was led to compare it with *Sarasvatichandra*. Munshi was acknowledged as the greatest ever novelist of Gujarat by his fans.

And Munshi's literary activities in the creative as well as non-creative fields began to blossom fast and fully. The young idealist of Gujarat looked at them with admiration and adoration. Munshi's literature began to throb with the new life that was throbbing in the political and cultural body of the nation; and the modern thoughts and ideologies like unrestrained individual freedom, proud and self-respecting womanhood, opposition to colour prejudice, and eradication of exploitation and slavery, began to be depicted in Munshi's works. They painted a glorious picture of the grandeur of ancient India. A number of omnipotent, omniscient, awe-inspiring supermen and visionaries, and clever, and capable men of affairs peopled his novels and plays.

The world which Munshi created was full of unbounded zest for life, and irrepressible pranks of romantic love. Weakness

was scoffed at; and pseudo-classical seriousness of speech and behaviour offered a convenient target for Munshi's wit and satire.

Munshi's novels set new standards of novel-writing in Gujarat. Well-knit plot, live characters, sparkling dialogues, quick action and readability came to be regarded as the *sine qua non* of a good novel; and art was required to be amoral and worthy to be pursued only for the artistic enjoyment it offered. The age of novels of the magnitude, grandeur and vision of *Sarasvatichandra* came to an end.

Looking at Munshi's creative activities in the fields of the novel and the drama, one discovers some common characteristics.

Munshi has generally ridiculed the Present; and found only in the Past the qualities of grandeur, greatness, sacrifice, courage etc. which had taken possession of his imagination. To put it in other words, the Present is the field which offers him scope for his satires and sarcasm, and it is the Past that suits his idealism. Secondly, Munshi's philosophy of life is extremely weak and poor. He seems to believe that the only thing to be worked for in life is success, success here and now and success by any means whatsoever. Therefore there is some inherent flaw in his conceptions of grandeur, greatness, dignity, power and cleverness. Because of this, his great and larger-than-life characters invariably behave at some point or the other in a way which is not consistent with their personality sought to be projected by Munshi; and their actions belie their professions. The most glaring examples of this, are his women and the Rishis. It is said that Munshi has created many brilliant and majestic women characters. Their brilliance and majesty are, in fact, sometimes nothing more than needless conceit, bluster and bombast. There is not a single major woman character of Munshi whose brilliance and majesty are sustained till the last in a natural way. Munshi's conception of *Aryatva*—nobility and excellence—has found its ideal in the ancient Rishis. But Munshi's Rishis are not persons of exceptional achievements in the fields of *Jnana* (knowledge derived from meditation on the higher truths of religion and philosophy), *Tapa* (penance to control physical senses and the mind) or upright moral conduct. They are just persons who eat, drink, observe beauty and enjoy it, sometimes compose poetry and sometimes, when necessary, contend in battle. These Rishis have no uncommon nobility or strength of character. They have no higher and nobler vision of life. They have no compunction about the purity or otherwise of the means they employ to serve their ends. They do not fight shy of resorting to any means whatsoever, even of shamelessly telling a lie, if it served their purpose. They do feel proud of their

Aryatva. But they have very little of the behaviour which can really be called *Arya*, noble and cultured. The greatest of Munshi's Rishis are malice and revenge incarnate. They are strangers to mercy, compassion and forgiveness.

The third characteristic of Munshi's creative genius is that his imagination is very circumscribed. His characters are more or less of the same type. All his heroines and heroes are cast in one and the same mould; and sometimes they are made to pass through one and the same pattern of situation, of course, under different names and different garbs. Munshi's novels and plays are wanting in that variety of characters, each sharply different from the other, which are invariably seen in the great masters of fiction and drama. Munshi has cleverly hidden these fundamental limitations of his vision and imagination often under dramatic incidents, flowery language and poetic style.

There was for some time much controversy about the liberties Munshi has taken with history in his novels. Munshi himself has explained his view about delineating historical characters. It may however be said that the role Munshi has assigned to some of his imaginary characters is so pivotal that one would be obliged to conclude that the novel could not have been written in the way in which it has been, had the imaginary character in question not been there.

Munshi has moreover drawn some of his historical characters in such a way that our traditional concepts about them suffer a shock. Not that there is anything sacrosanct about our traditional concepts. But they can be changed only if new historical researches lead us to new facts about their life. Munshi has also projected his contemporary social and political problems into the historical or Puranic *milieu* of his novels and plays, rendering them anachronistic.

Munshi's activities in the non-creative fields of literature are marked by the fact that their conclusions are based not upon a thorough and dispassionate study of all available facts, but on Munshi's *a priori* assumptions. Munshi, an able and successful lawyer that he was, selects and marshals his facts so adroitly that they cannot but impress. But to competent authorities many of Munshi's conclusions seem to be partisan and hastily drawn.

The horizon of Munshi, the dreamer, was ever expanding. From the Gujarat Sahitya Samsad, a modest literary society at Bombay to the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, a remarkable centre of Indian cultural renaissance, from the *Asmita* (I-am-ness—consciousness of unique individuality) of Gujarat to the unity and indivisibility of India, from the *pranalikabhanga* (breaking away from conventions) to the hymn of the glory of ancient Indian culture, and from the concept of *Sarasata* (interesting-ness)

and *Sachotata* (the quality of hitting the mark) as the soul of literature to *Mantradarshana* (Spontaneous vision of universal Truth expressed aphoristically) is no short a distance to cover.

Chunilal Vardhaman Shah (1887-1966)

Chunilal was for many years an assistant editor of the *Prajabandhu*, a renowned weekly periodical published from Ahmedabad. Chunilal, under the pseudonym of "Sahityapriya", ran in it a literary column, which was looked upon with very great respect.

Chunilal is also known as a novelist. His first novel *Pramoda Atahava Diler Aram* which was based on a Hindi novel *Hirbai* was published in 1907. Since then he went on translating or adapting novels from English, Bengali or Marathi or writing original novels. The most noteworthy among his novels, over 50 in number, are *Karmayogi Rajeshwar*, *Roopamati*, and *Jigar ane Ami*.

His *Kantak-chhayo Panth*, an ambitious novel in four parts, is the story of a Gujarati family. The period from 1813, the year when Gujarat faced one of the worst famines in her recorded history to 3rd June 1947, the day on which Jawaharlal Nehru announced the acceptance of the Mountbatton Plan, forms the background of the story.

This novel, thus, covers two great famines, two world wars and two great transfers of power—one from the East India Company to the British Crown, and the other from the British to the representatives of the people of India.

Some of the characters in this novel are historical, while some are fictitious. Some of the places, likewise, are real, some, legendary.

The material which is largely authentic, fails to constitute the stuff novel is made of. Perhaps for want of a genuine creative spark, the author has not been able to go much beyond the stage of plain reporting. He has not created a single character that would captivate the imagination of the reader for any length of time. The author's assessment of the native States, the British rule, its professions and practice, the socio-religious traditions etc., though given in the form of dialogues, fails to be integrated into the plot of the novel.

Chunilal was a steady writer, who never took undue liberty with history in his historical novels and who never wrote with a view to creating sensation. If he has not scaled phenomenal heights, he has not sunk into quagmire either.

Ramnarayan Pathak (1887-1955)

Ramnarayan Vishvanath Pathak, who wrote poetry under the pseudonym of "Shesha", short stories under the pseudonym of

“Dviref” and light essays under the pseudonym of “Svairavihari”, was born in Ganol. He started his career as an advocate in Sadra, from where he went to Ahmedabad, and became the Head Master of a local school. Later he took up a professorship at the Gujarat Vidyapith founded by Gandhiji. After the closure of the Vidyapith, he worked as a Professor of Gujarati Language and Literature in some Ahmedabad and Bombay Colleges.

Pathak has written poetry: *Shesha-nan Kavyo* and *Vishesha Kavyo*; short stories; *Deviref-ni Vato*, three parts; literary criticism; *Kavya-ni Shakti*, *Sahitya Vimarsha*, *Alochana*, *Arvachin Gujarati Kavyasahitya-nan Vaheno*, *Arvachin Gujarati Kavya Sahitya*, *Narmad—Arvachin Gadya Padya-no Praneta* among others; prosody: *Prachin Gujarati Chhando—Aitihasik Samalochana* and *Brihat Pingal*; light essays: *Svairavihar*, in two parts; one-act plays: *Kulangar ane Biji Kritio*.

He has also edited several books, chief of which is *Poorvalapa* of Kant. He has translated, in collaboration with Rasiklal Parikh, the first six chapters of Mammata's *Kavyaprakasha* and with Dharmanand Kosambi, the *Dhammapada*. He was also an editor of *Prasthan*, a distinguished monthly periodical.

A connoisseur of literature, a creative writer and a student of logic and philosophy, Pathak has made his mark as a poet, a short story writer, a reflective thinker, a light essayist, a humorist and, above all, a critic.

Pathak's poetry has considerable variety of form. He is a conscious artist. His poetry is marked by a manly control of emotions, an unbiassed view of life and a deep and abiding faith in the ultimate benignity of the scheme of things.

Though there is nothing that is trash in Pathak's poetry, some of the poems inspired by the death of his first wife, are a class by themselves. Their grief, though subdued, perhaps by the poet's conscious effort not to make a public demonstration of it, is intense enough to melt a stone and pound the heart of steel. At the sight of the dear one's dead body about to be taken out for final disposal, the poet says:

Soft! no fluster please! Do not get wet, O eyes! It is only a moment or two that you've got. So, check your flow a while. O tears! Gratify yourselves, my eyes! Never again will you see this beauty that always filled the world with her benign smile.⁹

3. धमाल न करो जराय नहि नेन भीनां यशो,
घडी ब घडी जे मळी नयनवारि ! यंभो जरा;
कृतार्थ थई लो; फरो नहि मळे ज सौन्दर्य आ
सदा जगत जे वडे हतुं हसंतुं मांगल्य को.

This deep-rooted pathos, this void left by the departure of his life-long companion, with nothing in future to hold on to, sometimes bursts out into a satire, as when the poet says:

I call you not for enjoying once again your company; nor to seek your advice in my dire difficulties. No, not even to quench somewhat the thirst of my eyes with a glimpse of you. But I call you to come, in order that I may sing before you my songs born of your separation.⁴

Sometimes the grief and disappointment of the poet's heart gets too powerful to be subdued:

And yet, if you won't come, my friend, do please anyhow call me to you to share with you your nectar.⁵

Besides these poems of the pathetic sentiment, Pathak has written poems on many themes, including the humorous. Some of these poems are marked by nobility of sentiment and elegance or loftiness of diction.

The short stories of *Dviref-ni Vato* in three parts are not all of the same level. Particularly some stories touching sexual problems in the third part are weak, but there are many stories in the *Vato* which are very well contrived. Dviref's "Mukundari" and "Khemi", are among the best short stories of Gujarati literature.

Pathak is an excellent student of human nature. With penetrating insight he sees through the things and in contrast with his contemporary Dhoomaketu, who is highly emotional, he constructs a short story with firm intellectual control over sentiments and emotions.

Pathak's short stories also abound in wit, humour and satire. They point at significance of life through a closely knit plot and are told in various interesting ways.

This highly cultured and intelligent man with a philosophic bent of mind and a refined sense of humour can be seen at work also in his light essays, *Svairavihar* in two parts. In these essays Pathak has exposed the inconsistencies of human nature seen in contemporary socio-political conditions. These conditions,

4. ના બોલાવું તુજ સહ ફરી મ્હાલવા સ્હેલગાહો,
ના લેવાને વિકટ મુજ મુશ્કેલીઓમાં સલાહો;
ના કે તારા દરસથી તૃષ્ણા ચક્ષુની કૈંક છીપે,
કિન્તુ ગાવા તુજ વિરહનાં ગીત તારી સમીપે.
5. સખિ તેમ છતાં ના આવો,
સખિ તેમ છતાં ના આવો,
તો આમ્રતનો સહભાગી કરવા કોઈ રીતે બોલાવો,

the target of Pathak's wit and satire having ceased to exist, many of these essays are dated.

Pathak is best known as a critic. Though he lacks Narasimharao's scholarship and Anandshankar's range of interest, he has a wonderful grasp of the principles of literature, sharp and keen insight, logical thinking based on sound philosophy and a prose-style that is at once lucid, precise, simple and elegant. His criticism is based upon a deep study of Sanskrit Aesthetics, complemented by principles of Western literary criticism. But he is completely original. Rarely does he follow the views of others or quote from others to substantiate his views. He never parades his knowledge, and never rambles outside the bounds of his subject, which he fathoms fully, without missing a single important detail and with a remarkable felicity, he expresses his views in simple yet chaste and dignified language.

In his reviews of books, Pathak sometimes ends with a neat summary of the contents; sometimes, as has happened in the case of his criticism of Premanand's *Nalakhyana*, he reads too much between the lines and hits at a significance which may not be consistent with the man, the moment and the *milieu* of the author. Yet nothing that author intended to convey nor a single point of beauty in the work in question ever escapes his notice. Instances where Pathak has fumbled in his understanding and assessment of a work of creative literature, particularly a poem, are hard to find.

Pathak's *Narmad—Arvachin Gadya Padya-no Praneta* is a collection of two studies—*Narmadashankar Kavi* and *Kavi Narmad-nun Gadya*. Of these the first one, *Narmadashankar Kavi* is a lecture delivered as the K. P. Trivedi Lecture at Surat in 1935. The second one *Kavi Narmad-nun Gadya* is based on the notes of a lecture the author delivered at Bombay in 1938, under the auspices of the Forbes Gujarati Sabha.

The first lecture is an assessment of Narmad as a poet; the second one, an assessment of the poet Narmad as a prose writer.

Arvachin Gujarati Kavyasahitya, is a collection of three lectures delivered by the author at Ahmedabad, under the auspices of the Gujarat Vernacular Society (the present-day Gujarat Vidya Sabha). These lectures deal largely with the formal aspect of poetry and discuss the changes that took place in composition of metres in (the then) modern poetry.

Arvachin Kavyasahitya-nan Vaheno is the Thakkar Vassonji Madhavji Lecture Series delivered by the author under the auspices of the Bombay University in 1938. These five lectures discuss the salient features noted by the author in the form as well as the content of (the then) modern poetry.

Pathak hardly makes a statement that is not corroborated by illustrations or documentary evidence. This is particularly so in cases which admit of difference of opinion. And he hardly makes a statement unless he has made an exhaustive study of material available to him. All these lectures bear testimony to Pathak's objectivity, insight, originality of outlook, and clarity of thought and expression.

In *Prachin Gujarati Chhando—Aitihasik Samalochana* Pathak has minutely examined the nature of rules governing the composition of metres ranging from the *Doha* of *Apabhramsha* Period to the *Deshis* of Dayaram; and thus traced the evolution of metres in old and mediaeval Gujarati literature.

Brihat Pingal is a monumental work on Gujarati prosody. Kavi Dalpatram in his *Gujarati Pingal*,⁶ Ranchhodbhai Udayram in his *Ran-Pingal* and Keshavlal Dhruva in his *Padyarachana-nu Prakar* and *Padyarachana-ni Aitihasik Samalochana* had, each in his own way, discussed prosody in Gujarati, based more or less on traditional concepts. In contradistinction with them, Pathak has given in the fifteen chapters of this book, his own cogent and coherent conception of the subject and in the appendices at the end of each chapter discussed in detail questions arising from the conception itself or matters distantly related to the conception. Since the approach is novel, and since it deals with the metres used in most of the major languages of India, Pathak has got the book printed in the Devnagari script, so that scholars of prosody in other Indian Languages also can consider and assess the theory and methodology advanced by Pathak.

Pathak's wife Hiraben is a poet. Her poems, *Parloke Patra* (Letters to One in the other World), though often archaic and longwinded in style, contain some moving sentiments of a relict's heart. Of the other women, Gita Parikh is noted for some of her poems delineating the wonder and fascination of a mother's heart at the sight of her first newborn child; and Panna Naik for depicting the deep-rooted agony of a mal-adjusted and barren life.

Svami Anand (1887-1976)

Svami Anand, whose name was Himmatlal Ramchandra Dave before he renounced the world, was a close associate of Gandhiji and ran his Navajivan Press for many years. He pioneered the simple, neat, artistic and inexpensive production of books in Gujarati.

Svami wrote in Marathi an account of his travels in the Himalayas. His Gujarati books include, among others, *Ishu-nun*

6. In the tenth edition of this book Dalpatram had made several changes, as advised by Keshaval Dhruva.

Balidana, Kula-Kathao, Dharati-nun Lun, Baraf-raste Badarinath, Navalan Darshan, etc.

Ishu-nun Balidan (the Sacrifice of Jesus) written in the style of an eye-witness-account is an extremely moving narration of the last days of Jesus Christ. His pen pictures of Dado Gavli, Monji Rudar, Mahadevthi Motera, and Dhanima in particular in *Kula Kathao* and *Dharatinun Lun*, establish Svami as one of the masters of Gujarati prose. His style exudes an aroma of the soil of Gujarat.

Muni Jinvijay (1888-1976)

Muni Jinvijay was born in Rupaheli, Mevad. He had renounced the world and become a Jain sadhu. But feeling suffocated by the rigidity of the conventional life in a monastery, he discarded the habit and returned to the world to lead the simple life of a teacher and writer.

A profound scholar of ancient literature, history, religious books and antiquity, Muniji joined the Gujarat Vidyapith of Gandhiji and directed the activities of the Gujarat Puratattva Mandir till it was closed down on account of the Satyagraha movement.

Muniji has also worked as a Professor of Jain Literature and History at Shantiniketan of Poet Rabindranath Tagore, and then at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan of Kanaiyalal Munshi at Bombay.

Muniji's first book was published in 1915. Since then he has published over 20 books, including *Prachin Jain Lekha-Sangraha*, in two parts, *Jain Aitihasik Gurjar Kavya Sanchay*, *Prachin Gujarati Gadya Sandarbha*, *Prabandha Chintamani* (Sanskrit) and *Puratana Prabandha Sangraha* (Sanskrit).

Besides this Muniji has directed the research, editing and translation of about a hundred volumes. As a recognition of his contribution to the field of oriental studies and research, the German Oriental Society had elected him as their Honorary Member.

Tribhuvan Gaurishankar Vyas (1888-1975)

Vyas is noted for his *Ratanba-no Garbo*, narrating in the style of a folk-song, the tale of Jallianwalla Bagh, beginning with the line. "The British Rule arrived, it arrived and thrived, Ratanba," which was published in Gandhiji's *Navajivan* and got instant popularity. Vyas is also known for his "Hail to thee, thou, land of Saurashtra!" He has written some charming poems,

7. અંગ્રેજી રાજ્ય તો આવ્યું, આવીને ફાવ્યું રતનબા.

8. ધન્ય હો ધન્ય સૌરાષ્ટ્ર ધરણી.

portraying the beauty and majesty of several seasons and of the jungles of Gir in Saurashtra. He has written some most beautiful poems for children; as also some fine satirical poems. He has translated the *Meghaduta* and the *Ritusamhara* of Kalidasa.

Kishorelal Masharuwala (1890-1952)

Kishorelal Ghanashyamlal Masharuwala was born in Bombay. He was a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi and his personal secretary for some time. He had summarised, during Gandhiji's life time, Gandhiji's views on all important subjects, which were published in 14 volumes under the caption *Gandhi Vichar-Dohan*. He edited the Harijan papers of Gandhiji for four and a half years after the assassination of Gandhiji, and his exposition of Gandhiji's views was recognised in all quarters as the most authentic.

In his childhood, Kishorelal met with a serious accident, from which he was miraculously saved. His father Ichchharam, being an ardent follower of the Svaminarayana Sect, thereafter, dedicated him to God Svaminarayana. Kishorelal, therefore, wrote, Ghanashyamlal (the original name of Sahajananda Svami or Svaminarayana) as his father's name. He was deeply influenced by the life and preachings of Sahajananda Svami, Mahatma Gandhi and Kedarnathji or Nathji, his Guru, who directed him to the path of equanimity and inner peace.

Kishorelal has written four biographies: *Rama ane Krishna*, *Buddha ane Mahavira*, *Sahajananda Svami ane Isu Khrista*; three books on education: *Kelavani-na-Paya*; *Kelavani-Vivek* and *Kelavani-Vikas*; and six books on philosophical thought; *Jivan-Sodhan*; *Ahimsa-Vivechan*; *Gita-Manthan*; *Satyamaya Jiven Yane Satyasatya-Vichar*. *Samuli Kranti*; and *Sansar ane Dharma*, in two parts. He has also given a metrical translation of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

Kishorelal does not accept the heroes of his biographies as some superhuman or supernatural phenomena. Leaving, therefore, the miracles associated with their lives aside, he examines their lives as the careers of human beings, and shows how they rose to be objects of reverence of mankind. He points out their short comings as well. These biographies are marked by a strictly rational approach and logical analysis.

Kishorelal's books on education deal with the basic problems of education. Without being carried away by any dogmas or views of others including Gandhiji, he thinks for himself afresh, starting with the assumption that the function of education is to awaken and develop man's faculty of discrimination and that an educationist should try to forge and strengthen bonds of unity between man and man by making man control

his ego and sense of 'mine-ness' (mamatva) which tend to aggravate the forces of divisiveness.

That man can find his fulfillment only through selfless altruistic actions, is the basis of all Kishorelal's thoughts. He says that Jnana (true and pure knowledge), not Moksha (Salvation), should be the fourth and the ultimate Purushartha (principal object of human life)⁹. He also says that man has no natural mother (or father) tongue; and the language to which he is exposed in his infancy becomes his language. In the light of this he closely examines the problem of instruction through mother tongue and with a view to national integration stresses the importance of instruction through one language, rather than through the mother tongue. Script, to him, is just a means; so it need not be a bone of contention. If for the sake of maintaining harmonious relations between people of different States or communities of India, it is necessary to give up either one's language or one's script, then it is the script that should be given up. Kishorelal says that the study of history should be relegated to a subordinate position, because it is difficult to preserve the entire history of the past. And the incomplete parts that are preserved tend to build up walls between people and people. No man or nation has ever learned the lesson of history and gained wisdom.

These are some of Kishorelal's revolutionary ideas. But coming as they do from a rationalist who has stability and progress of India and peace and unity of the world at heart, they have power to set us thinking afresh.

Kishorelal's greatest contribution, however, is in the field of philosophic thought. In his six books on the subject, he critically and in an unbiassed way examines the basic assumptions from which our attitudes to life flow. Being a positive thinker, however, he starts with the assumption that "in the ultimate analysis, it is only those societies and those families who do not remain idle, who exert self-control and behave according to prescribed codes in matters of wealth and sex, and who observe the rules of food and personal hygiene, that find happiness, and prosper from generation to generation"¹⁰. He

9. The other objects being Dharma, (Religious or moral merit, virtue, righteousness, good works), Artha (Attainment of riches or worldly prosperity) and Kama (Love or desire of sensual enjoyments).

10. છેવટે તે જ સમાજ અને તે જ કુટુંબો પેઢી દર પેઢી ઉત્કર્ષ અને સુખ પામે છે, જે નિરલસ અને કંચન કામિનીની શાબતમાં સંયમ-નિયતાચારી સેવે છે અને આહાર તથા શોચના નિયમો પાળે છે.

Samuli Kranti, February, 1955 edition, Pp. 8-9.

has, of course, not examined the validity of this assumption which is his touchstone to test the truth or otherwise of all our conventional beliefs, ideas and attitudes.

Kishorelal belongs to the front rank of those thinkers who have in their own original and independent way thought *de novo* about life, accepting the authority only of the ever-vigilant discerning intellect.

Idealism and practicability both combine themselves in Kishorelal's thinking. Kishorelal does think about the essentials of religion; but he does not concern himself about the mystery of life before or life hereafter. All his thoughts and reflections are, in the final analysis, centred on one question: How man's life on this earth could best be lived in peace and complete harmony between his internal and external worlds? From that point of view, he can be ranked among the practical idealists of the Pandit Yuga, like Govardhanram and Anandshankar.

Kishorelal shares in common with the thinkers of the Pandit Yuga his social commitment and practical idealism. But while the thinkers of the Pandit Yuga examine the question of man's duty in the context of his social problems, Kishorelal examines it in the context of India's political problems. He is so deeply shaken at the vivisection of India that took place in 1947, that he examines in his *Samuli Kranti*, his *magnum opus*, the question how best the unity of what is now left of India could be maintained. Since Hindus form the largest majority in a secular nation that India is, it would be their attitudes and behaviour which would ultimately strengthen or destroy democracy, which, according to him, is the best form of government. He, therefore, examines in depth the fundamental religious beliefs of Hindus that have for innumerable centuries conditioned the Hindu mind and the Hindu view of life; and concludes that they require to be thoroughly revolutionized. He also explains how this could be achieved.

Like the writers of the Pandit Yuga such as Govardhanram and Anandshankar, Kishorelal also explains not only the practical problems but also the problems of philosophic thought purely on a rational basis. But while the writers of the Pandit Yuga have, in order to enlist the maximum cooperation of both the orthodox and the radicals of their days in their endeavour to revitalize the Hindu Society, couched their views about the relation between the individual and society in the terminology of the ancient scriptures, Kishorelal has all throughout acted as an independent thinker rather than an interpreter or an apologist. Kishorelal has examined our conventional beliefs from their

very roots and even at the risk of hurting the susceptibility and pride of many of us, he has expressed in clear and unambiguous terms what he thought to be right, without sparing even Gandhiji and Kakasaheb.

Both Govardhanram and Kishorelal are concerned with the translation of their idealism into practical reality. But Govardhanram handles his readers tactfully. Kishorelal, the revolutionary, is frank and forthright. Govardhanram can hope to have both the conservative and the reformer on his side; Kishorelal must face the opposition particularly from the conservative section of the society.

Kishorelal has originality of outlook, clarity and logicity of thought, and simplicity, precision, directness and simple dignity of style. His place is among the most original thinkers not only of Gujarat alone, but of the whole of India.

Dhansukhlal Mehta (1890-1974)

Dhansukhlal Krishnalal Mehta was born in Surat. He is one of the pioneers of short stories in Gujarat, and one of the first writers who portrayed the psychological conflicts of his characters.

Dhansukhlal has also written plays, art criticism, reviews of books, autobiography, and humorous essays. He has, in collaboration with Jyotindra Dave, written *Ane Badhan*, the first humorous novel after *Bhadrambhadr*; and, in collaboration with Gulabdas Broker, written *Dhumraser*, dramatization of one of Broker's short stories of that name.

Dhansukhlal has an eye for the pathetic and the humorous in the life around him; and a style that is simple, and direct. Dhansukhlal's humour is subtle, refined and good-natured. It is free from sting and malice.

Mahadev Haribhai Desai (1892-1942)

Mahadev whose dedication to Gandhiji was total, was an excellent translator, who, in collaboration with Narahari Parikh, brought into Gujarati *Chitrangada*, *Vidaya ane Abhishap* and *Prachin Sahitya* of Rabindranath Tagore. Mahadev also translated *Viraj Vahu* as well as some stories of Sharat Chandra Chatterji from Bengali and *On Compromise* of Morley and the autobiography of Jawaharlal Nehru from English. He has written a history of the Bardoli Satyagraha. He has written two short biographies *Vir Vallabhbhai* and *Be Khudai Khidmatgaro* and translated into English numerous articles of Gandhiji, and also his *Story of My Experiments with Truth*. But his greatest contribution to Gujarati Literature is his *Diaries*, in 13 parts. Besides being important as a record of the history of

India, it is a magnificent book which at once brings to life three personalities: the phenomenal one of Gandhiji, the loyal, unsophisticated and witty one of Sardar Patel and the soft-spoken, self-effacing, highly cultured personality of the author himself.

Indulal Kanaiyalal Yajnik (1892-1972)

Indulal Kanaiyalal Yajnik is noted for his two excellent monthly periodicals: *Navajivan* and *Satya* (1915) and *Yugadharma* (1922). His *Kumar-nan Striratno* is notable for its prose; and his *Autobiography*, in five parts (1955-1971), though not a model of literary style, gives graphic picture of Gujarat during the years 1892 to 1921. Indulal himself being vitally connected with all the major activities of the period, he is one of the most appropriate authorities to write such a book. Some of his personal reminiscences, particularly the one relating to his wife Kumud, are masterly specimens of self-analysis.

Ramanlal Desai (1892-1954)

Ramanlal Vasantlal Desai was born in Sinor, (Vadodara State). During the formative years of his life, he was fond of wrestling and participating in dramatic performances. He was deeply influenced by *Kavya Madhurya*, Persian Language and the *Shreyahsadhak Audhikari Varga* of Vadodara.

Ramanlal has written novels, short stories, poems, dramas, essays and autobiography. He is best known, however, as a novelist.

Ramanlal had written at an earlier stage *Maharana Pratap-nun Charitra* and a description of Pavagadh, the seat of goddess Kalika and a fort of great historical interest. But he can be said to have made his debut in literature in 1920 by his drama *Samyukta*. Five years later he published his second drama *Shankita Hridaya*. But he attracted the notice of literary Gujarat by his novels, *Jayant* (1925), *Shirisha* (1927) and *Kokila* (1929). When first published as the annual gift to the readers of the *Sayaji-Vijay*, a daily periodical published from Vadodara, these novels could hardly attract any notice. But when they were reprinted later in an elegant format by Moolshankar Somnath Bhatt, who pioneered the artistic production of novels and collections of poems in Gujarat, Ramanlal came to be recognised as a novelist next only to Munshi.

And subsequent publication of his novels in rapid succession for a whole decade led Ramanlal to the peak of popularity. In spite of Munshi's glamour, Ramanlal's was a household name and his novels, quite naturally captured the market.

Ramanlal's novels are marked by pictures of happy, buoyant and contented married life, a noble idealism, depiction of normal everyday life, a subtle and refined humour and an easy-flowing, chaste and lucid style.

Munshi has largely written historical novels, Ramanlal has largely written social novels. Munshi has dazzling brilliance; Ramanlal has sweetness and gentility. Munshi's characters belong to the high and mighty past; Ramanlal's characters belong to the contemporary upper middle class. Munshi's heroines are proud and liberated; those of Ramanlal are lovely little things, models of suavity and charm. Munshi aspires to resuscitate the glory that was Gurjar Desha; Ramanlal provides a background of the major political and cultural currents prevailing in Gujarat of the Gandhian Era. Ramanlal has not aspired to create in his novels something great, grand, unique or phenomenal. His novels are woven round the life of an average well-educated Gujarati. Their greatest characteristic is their contemporaneity and their greatest asset is simplicity and readability.

The limitations of Munshi's power of imagination are also the limitations of Ramanlal's. The heroes and heroines of Ramanlal, too, are cast in one and the same mould. Moreover, Ramanlal's stories often tend to be stories of mystery and then they cease to be convincing. The flow of Ramanlal's narration is always smooth and easy; but it is usually slow and constantly interrupted by the author's reflections and observations and comments in season and out of season. The plot of Ramanlal's novels sometimes is not as convincing and probable as it is well-knit.

Vishvanath Bhatt has described Ramanlal as the *Yugamoorti Vartakar*, a novelist embodying in his novels the spirit of his age. Ramanlal's novels have always reflected his contemporary currents of thoughts and ideologies. During the Gandhian Era, he embodied in his novels like *Divyachakshu*, *Grama Lakshmi* and *Bharelo Agni*, the ideas of physical culture, non-violent non-cooperation, eradication of untouchability, Hindu-Muslim unity, village uplift and the futility of the terrorist movement. In the post-independence era, he expressed in his *Zanzavat* and *Pralaya* the disillusionment and disenchantment that had settled over the minds of the people as a result of communal disharmony, black market, craze for power, and vanity, hypocrisy and immorality that were, rather, the rule of the day.

Of these the canvass of *Pralaya* is wider. In it the author has shown by means of a well-told story, where the logic of radical science operates within the limits of probability, that science and politics in unworthy hands in a world divided into different camps will ultimately result in the total annihilation of man on earth. The plot of the novel extends up to the year of Grace 2006, and the scene of action is the world itself. Ramanlal's *Bala Jogan* about Miran is also noteworthy.

Stage performances of Ramanlal's dramas *Sanyukta* and *Shankita Hridaya* were well received by the public. Ramanlal has written several one-act plays and short stories; but they have no striking merit or characteristics.

Ramanlal's collection of poems *Niharika* contains some good songs where sentiments and language have happily blended. But they are mostly echoes of Nanalal. Ramanlal's autobiography *Gai Kal* covers a period of the first 16 years of the author's life. It provides much interesting information about the period. *Madhyahna-nan Mrigajal* is also an autobiographical work.

Tejachitro is a collection of beautiful profiles of some persons of the past and the present.

Dhoomaketu (1892-1965)

Gaurishankar Govardhanram Joshi—known only as Dhoomaketu—was born in Virpur, a small village in Saurashtra. From humble beginnings he rose to be a successful writer, who for many years of his life lived only on his pen.

Dhoomaketu has written short stories, novels, light and reflective essays, one-act plays, biographies and autobiography. But he is best known as a short story writer.

In Gujarati, Ranchhodbhai Udayram had published *Prastavika Katha Samaj* (1866) and the poet Dalpatram had published in 1870 a collection of didactic stories under the caption *Tarkik Bodh*. Framji Bomanji Patel published some years later, *Gujarat Janavarta*, *Gujarat ane Kathiawad Desh-ni Varta*, *Rajvir*

Katha and Stri Charitra, all collections of stories¹¹.

Narayan Hemachandra and Amritlal Padhiyar also had written stories. And stories by Rammohanrai Jasvantrai, Ranjitram Vavabhai, Shivubhai Pandit, Dahyabhai P. Patel and others were periodically published in monthly magazines like *Chandra*, *Sundari Subodh*, *Varta Varidhi*, *Sahitya* and *Sama-lochak* etc. *Rasili Vartao*, in two parts, the collections of of Rammohanrai's stories had also been published in the beginning of the twentieth century. Manilal Chhabaram Bhatt also had published a collection *Kathiawad-ni Juni Vato*, and Bhogindrarao Ratanlal Divetia also had written stories like *Tran Fakir* and *Namdar Sir Khedut* and adapted three stories of Tolstoy.

But all these stories were of an elementary kind. Their style was crude. They were bare narrations of incidents; and most of them had a moral to convey.

In 1913 Malayanil—Kanchanlal Vasudev Mehta—(1892-1919) started writing short stories and Dhansukhlal Mehta's short story *Pratibimba ane Chhaya* was published in the same year. "Narad"—Matubhai Kantawalla—also started writing his

11. K. M. Jhaveri observes : "The style and language in which the stories are put, are very simple, and so very like the language written by a Hindu Gujarati, that reader admired the ability of a Parsi writer who could, then, write Gujarati wholly indistinguishable from that written by a Hindu. In fact, Navalram remarked that he had till then never seen, such pure Gujarati written by a Parsi. The "Preface" was written in an equally faultless style. It is now alleged, however, that Framji was responsible only for making short notes like this : "A King—Two Queens—One favourite, another not—no Prince born—Unhappy—Prince born—King ignorant—Prince going Shikar—Unexpected meeting" on hearing the stories from their reciters. These short notes were then amplified and elaborated by several Hindu clerks and assistants and hence the Hindu Gujarati language. The compiler of the *Sathi-nun Sahitya* vouches for the truth of this statement. (See page 175. He says he himself supplied one such story and his friend Keshavalal Parikh several others).

Looking, however, to the preface and another Gujarati book called the *Kumar Darpan* written by him, it is hard to conceive why one who could write such fine Gujarati should resort to the subterfuge referred to above. Whatever the truth may be, it does not affect the merits of the book, nor its value to literature".

Further milestones in Gujarati Literature. 2nd Edition, 1956, pp. 254-255.

stories by about the same time; and since then the Gujarati short story started to come into its own.

That a short story is not an abridged novel nor an inflated anecdote nor a vignette, but is an independent form of art, with a distinct beginning, middle and end, was for the first time shown in 1918 by the *Govalani* (the "Milk-maid"), a perfect short story by Malayanil.

Of the contemporary short story writers of Malayanil, mention must be made of Dhansukhlal Krishnalal Mehta and Kanaiyalal Munshi. Historically, Dhansukhlal's *Pratibimba ane Chhaya* (1913) was published long before the publication of *Govalani* (1918) and the number of his short stories also is considerable. But a large part of these is composed of translations or adaptations.

Munshi's short stories portray the life of ordinary middle class people. They are largely a satire on the ignorance, orthodoxy, conformity, etc. of the author's contemporary society. Munshi having diverted himself to the writing of novels and plays, did not continue writing short stories. Some of his short stories like *Shamulsha-no Vivah*, *Agnihotri*, *Gomati Dada-nun Gaurav* and *Mari Kamchalau Dharmapatni* are typical of the art of Munshi, the short story writer.

In the Gandhian Era, when the Gujarati writer turned towards the portrayal of rural life, Dhoomaketu arrived in 1926 with his *Tanakha* (the "Sparks") Mandal (Part) One. For the first time in Gujarati literature he brought us gems of short stories in ample measure. In the 20 of his collections of short stories, he portrayed with deep understanding and genuine sympathy, the poetic part of rural life and often romanticized it. Liberating the Gujarati short story from the sphere of the middle class, Dhoomaketu took it to the lowest strata of society. Never before had Gujarat seen the immense variety of time, places, characters and situations that Dhoomaketu provided. From hunters, railway linesmen, vegetable vendors, woodcutters of hilly regions, prostitutes, cobblers, waterers, to simple decent noble-hearted Brahmins and the sophisticated elite found themselves in the world of Dhoomketu. Dhoomaketu also portrayed characters from the mediaeval period, from history and mythology and from his own times. He found his short stories in the squares of cities, in the outskirts of villages, on the slopes of mountains, and on the banks of rivers. Dhoomketu was the first writer to point out the beauty and poetry of rural life and the courage, nobility, strength of character, integrity and fads of its folk.

Besides these highly idealistic and poetic pictures of life, Dhoomaketu has also given realistic pictures of life, aiming at social reform.

Dhoomaketu constructs his stories well; but being a lyricist at heart, his short stories abound in sentiments. Sometimes, Dhoomketu's characters become a little too sentimental and weak-minded. Sometimes, the core of the story is too weak to warrant the sentiment it is sought to arouse. Dhoomketu's best assets are touching delineation of emotions, picturesque descriptions and chaste and gleaming diction.

Dhoomaketu and Dviref (Ramnarayan Pathak), each in his own way served as a complement to the other. Dhoomaketu was emotional; Dviref, rational and logical. Dhoomaketu excelled at poetic descriptions; Dviref, at the portrayal of the complexity of the human mind. Dhoomaketu's main interest lies in the content of the story; Dviref's in chiselled and polished form. Dhoomketu's characters, sometimes overpowered by sentimentalism, behave crazily; Dviref's characters sometimes lack the warm touch of life.

Dhoomaketu has written about 17 novels. Though a prose-writer, he has the spirit of a lyric poet. He, therefore, excels more in reflections charged with emotion, descriptions and visions of greatness and grandeur than in characterization and the proper development of plot. Many chapters of his novels read like lovely short stories rather than inseparable parts of an indivisible whole. Dhoomaketu feels more at home in situations that afford scope to his emotions and visionariness, than in the depiction of events strictly circumscribed by historical facts.

When one talks about historical novels, one cannot but remember Munshi. Munshi and Dhoomaketu, both endeavour to recreate the greatness and glamour of Gujarat of the Solanki period. The pivotal characters of the most well-known novels of both are not the kings of Gujarat, but their chief ministers¹². The chief ministers of both are mighty, intellectual giants, steeped in devotion to Gujarat, almost omniscient and omnipotent. Their valour sprights from unrequited love. And they both have success as their ultimate value of life. They are therefore indifferent to the purity or otherwise of the means they employ to serve their ends.

Thus Dhoomaketu reminds the reader of Munshi at every stage. But the power of Munshi lies in characterization; the

12. Munjal in *Gujarat-no Nath* of Munshi, and Damodar in *Raj Sannyasi* of Dhoomaketu.

power of Dhoomaketu lies in emotionally charged reflections and lovely visions. If Dhoomaketu does not take as much liberty with history as Munshi does, Munshi's majestic and awe-inspiring characters, throbbing with life are hard to meet with in Dhoomaketu. Munshi's historical novels are stories of great and extraordinary events of life of exceptionally great characters; Dhoomaketu's historical novels hardly go beyond the pail of good detective novels. Dhoomaketu in sheer enthusiasm of singing the glory of Gujarat sometimes describes events that defeat his purpose.

Dhoomaketu's autobiographical writings *Jivanpanth*, and *Jivanrang*, recreate the times of his childhood and adolescence and bring back to life the men and women he knew. They are more like interesting memoirs and short stories than an exercise in honest self-revelation.

His *Pagdandi* is a collection of accounts of travels across several romantic beauty spots,—natural as well as man-made—of India. It is noteworthy for its charming descriptions and reflections.

His *Pan Goshthi* is a collection of his humorous articles.

Deshalji Parmar (1894-1966)

Deshalji Kanji Parmar was among the first few writers of the Gandhian Era, who sought to inspire the youth in particular to acts of courage and heroism. He wrote on several incidents and persons of national importance like Bardoli¹³, Dandi¹⁴ and Dharasana,¹⁵ Motilal Nehru,¹⁶ Jatin Das¹⁷ and Ramanbhai Nilkanth¹⁸. He expressed in his poems the aspirations of the youth of the day, which was to serve as a stone in the foundation that was being laid for the nation's greatness and dissolve into the immortal history of the land¹⁹. He has also written poems for children. All poems have been collected in *Uttarayana*.

13. A small town in Gujarat, renowned for its no-tax campaign. It threw up the great Vallabhbhai Patel as the Sardar, the leader.

14. A tiny sea-shore village in Gujarat, where Gandhiji broke the salt-law.

15. A sea-shore village, noted for the inhuman atrocities committed by the British power on Satyagrahis defying salt-law.

16. A distinguished patriot; father of Jawaharlal Nehru.

17. A political prisoner who, in protest against injustice, went on hunger strike in jail and died on the 64th day.

18. A noted social reformer and man of Gujarati letters. See pp.

19. પુરાણ પાયાના ચળતરમહી પથ્થર થવું,
અમર ઇતિહાસે મઢી જવું.

Ramprasad Bakshi (1894)

Ramprasad Premshankar Bakshi is a distinguished scholar of Sanskrit. His *Natyarasa* is a lucid exposition of the process of *Rasanishpatti* and the various components of drama according to Indian dramatics. His *Karuna rasa* analyses the nature of the Karuna Rasa, the pathetic sentiment. His *Vangmaya Vimarsha* is a collection of his articles on literary criticism. These articles cover certain aspects of Poetics, Aesthetics and Dramatics. They are based on a profound study of Indian Aesthetics and the author's insight and power of assimilation.

Rambhai (as he is popularly known) has also translated both volumes of Narasimharao's Wilson Philological Lectures entitled *Gujarati Language And Literature*. He has edited, besides, the diary of Narasimharao, in collaboration with Dhansukhlal Mehta.

In erudition and equipment, Rambhai is a representative of the Pandit Yuga. But most of his literary work is done during the post-1955 period.

He is held in high esteem by writers because of his Sanskrit scholarship and the sympathy and encouragement he ungrudgingly and liberally offers to new writers.

Jhaverchand Meghani (1897-1947)

Jhaverchand Kalidas Meghani was born in Chotila, Saurashtra. After his graduation in 1916, he worked as a teacher for some time in a Bhavnagar High School. Then having worked for some years in an industrial concern at Calcutta, he joined the editorial board of *Saurashtra*, a weekly periodical published from Ranpur, Saurashtra. Since then, he worked as a journalist for most of his life.

Meghani has written poetry, novels, short stories, plays, criticism, essays, biographies, satires and accounts of travels. He has also done translations and adaptations, and unearthed and edited folk-literature of Kathiawad.

Meghani's poems have been collected in three volumes: *Yugavandana*, *Ekataro* and *Ravindra Vina*. Of these, *Ravindra Vina* is an adaptation of some of the poems of the great Indian poet and Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore; *Ekataro*, a collection of his songs written in the style of traditional bhajans (devotional songs), and *Yugavandana* is a collection of poems reflecting the spirit of the Gandhian Era—the urge for freedom and sacrifice and concern for the under-privileged. Several of these poems are translations or adaptations.

Meghani was essentially a man of the masses. Like the ancient bards, he, by his powerful recitation moved thousands to tears or inspired thousands to acts of unbelievable heroism. He had drawn tears from the eyes of the judge who had sentenced him to two years in jail, for a crime he never committed²⁰. He recited on that occasion with the judge's permission, in the Court at Dhandhuka, his *Chhelli Prarthana* (the Last Prayer). The poem was inspired, as Meghani says by a saying (which he does not quote) of the Irish hero Mc Swiney.

His identification with the spirit of the nation was so perfect that on reading his poem *Chhello Katoro* (the last Cup of poison) which Meghani had specially composed for the occasion when Gandhiji was starting for England in order to attend the First Round Table Conference in 1931, Gandhiji had remarked to the effect that Meghani had correctly described what was going on in his (Gandhiji's) mind.

Because of his ability to touch, by his excellent recitation, or oral delivery, the heart of the masses and the generality of the elite alike, Meghani had achieved a measure of popularity which no other writer in contemporary Gujarat could ever equal.

Meghani is more at ease in his adaptations than in his original poems. This does not mean that he lacks the genius for poetry. His original poems, beginning with the lines

My mid-night dreams—they sparkle and sparkle and vanish into thin air²¹.

or The hammer speaks and the anvil listens.²².

or Brothers mine! On the cremation ground of the land of five rivers²³, three saplings are planted²⁴.

20. Meghani was charged with having made a seditious speech at Barwala. As Meghani himself has asserted, he was fast asleep in his house at Ranpur on the date and on the time when he was alleged to have made that speech. It is said to have turned out that the person who was to be arrested for the speech was one Mr. Jodhani. Jodhani in Gujarati script written by a near-illiterate clerk would well read like Meghani; and hence, as the story goes, this comedy of Errors!

21. મારી માફમરાતનાં સોળલાં ચમકી ચમકી ચાલ્યાં જાય. (જાંસના)

22. ઘણ રે બોલે ને ઇરણ સાંભળે હો જી. (ઘણ રે બોલે ને)

23. Punjab.

24. વીરા મારા પંચ રે સિંધુને સ્મશાન, રોપાણાં ત્રણ રુસંઢાં હો જી. (ફૂલમાલ)

This poem was written when Bhagatsinh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were hanged in 1931.

are some of the poems which are good by any standard. But most of his original poems lack artistic finish.

Meghani's adaptations, on the other hand, have definite guidelines, though he quite often adds to the original much of his own and takes away also much from it.

Meghani is a poet of powerful sentiments. His mastery over the spoken language is remarkable. And haunting tunes from folk-songs of Saurashtra are at his beck and call. Powerful echoes of contemporary national thoughts and sentiments are both his strength and weakness.

Meghani's short stories collected in the two parts of *Meghani-ni Navalikao* are of uneven texture. Most of the stories portray the pathetic plight of women, manual labourers, and the depressed. The stories of the first part, which were written at a later stage, hit at the vulgarity and ugliness of society.

The author is thoroughly dissatisfied with the structure of the society, old or new. In both the social structures he finds the same type of hypocrisy, selfishness, cowardice, and bluster. This society offers no scope for man's individuality, enterprise or the spirit of service to blossom. The bulldozer is always there to smash to smithereens anything that does not fit in its scheme of things.

Meghani has written historical novels like *Samarangan*, *Sorath Taran Vahetan Pani*, *Ra Gangajaliyo* and *Gujarat-no Jay*, in two parts and social novels like *Tulsi Kyaro*, *Vevishal* and *Niranjan*.

Written in instalments, under pressure of much other work, most of Meghani's novels lack symmetry. But Meghani has a genius for characterization and fathoming the depths of the human heart. His women characters in particular like Bhabhu (*Vevishal*), Bhadra (*Tulsi Kyaro*) and Anupama (*Gujarat-no Jay*) are his best creations. If Munshi's major women characters are much-pampered adolescent daughters and Ramanlal Desai's are charming beloveds, then Meghani's major women characters are models of Indian motherhood. Meghani excels in the portrayal of family life.

Meghani is a master of Gujarati prose. It is he who has proved more effectively and successfully than any one else the power of the language of the soil; and given to Gujarati literature, more than anyone else, varied, fresh and lovely similes. His best prose, sometimes dancing playfully like a stream, sometimes flowing with the graceful majesty of a post-monsoon Ganga in the plains, draws sharply defined pen pictures and

portraits and creates appropriate atmosphere. With short and homely phrases of conversation it brings out the traits of his characters; and with its beautiful melody it captivates the heart of the readers. It is, however, not equal to the task of expressing serious reflective or philosophic thought.

Meghani's greatest contribution is in the field of folk-literature. Of course, it cannot be said that Meghani was the pioneer in the field. Long before Meghani's arrival on the literary scene, Framji Bomanji Patel and Manilal Chhabaram Bhatt had collected some stories of Gujarat and Kathiawad. And Ranjitram Vavabhai Mehta, too, had done spade work in the field. But the work that Meghani did was both qualitatively and quantitatively unique and unprecedented. He moved from place to place in Saurashtra, and with utmost humility, sweetness and courtesy, touched the hearts of rural men and women and persuaded them to dictate to him whatever of folk-literature they had at the tip of their tongue. He, thus, collected numerous lullabies, children's songs, songs sung by the rural folk at work and play, songs sung at the celebration of seasonal and religious festivals, marriage songs, *jatanan* (humorous and satirical songs sung at the time of marriage), *marashiya* (dirges), bhajans (devotional songs), ballads and duhas (pithy couplets) etc. and stories of love and heroism, of outlaws and saints. From numerous variations, he prepared with much painstaking research what, according to him, was an authentic text; and placed his work before the public. He held *Dayara* (gatherings for enjoyment of folk-literature) at leading cities of Gujarat and at Bombay and by his powerful recitation of folk-songs and his gift of story-telling, he brought to the notice of the sophisticated elite the wealth, variety and beauty of the folk-literature of Saurashtra.

Not resting satisfied at this, Meghani compared folk-literature of Gujarati with the folk-literature of some of the other Indian languages and some languages of the world and sorted out the salient features common to all folk-literature. He also pointed out the similarity of sentiments expressed in folk-literature and in what is generally called literature proper or literature of the sophisticated. With his study of the folk-literature of some of the foreign countries he showed how the fundamental sentiments and even their modes of expression are the same the world over. All this he did with the dedication of a missionary.

Meghani also ran in *Janmabhoomi*, a leading Gujarati daily periodical from Bombay, *Kalam Ane Kitab*, a weekly page devoted to book reviews and literary titbits. Not that Meghani,

was the first to run a page like this. But he made this page extremely popular.

Meghani's reviews are marked by his natural warmth, sincerity and outspokenness. He has not spared, when necessary, giants like Balvantrai Thakore, Narasimharao and Kavi Nanlal; and has not been niggardly of praise for an unknown up and coming writer, if he seemed to deserve it. Meghani's opinions are largely based on his first impressions and are sometimes controversial. But he has eulogized beauty wheresoever he found it. When we look to the fact that many other papers also followed the footsteps of Meghani and started literary columns, and the interest in literary matters that Meghani aroused in ordinary readers is still maintained to some extent, we can realize how timely and important was the work which Meghani did.

Meghani's letters published under the caption '*Likhitang Snehadhin Jhaverchand*' are some of the best specimens of the genre in Gujarati. Every word of them comes from a heart that is sincere, warm, and full of love and tender concern. It is not a literary man, a scholar, an academician, or a guide or a patron, but a human being with excellent qualities of heart that emerges from them. In literature as well as in life Meghani stood for courage, nobility, integrity, humility and self-respect, values which seem to be dying with a fast dying age.

Vijayrai Kalyanrai Vaidya (1897-1974)

Vijayrai has written poems, light-essays, account of travels, biography, diary, etc. But he is best known as a critic of the Romantic School and as an editor of a purely literary periodical.

He started in 1924, the *Kaumudi*, a quarterly periodical, which made, so to say, history in literary journalism. The depth and scholarship coupled with the brilliance and artistry of style of some of its articles and the courage of conviction with which it convincingly exposed the plagiarism of Munshi and Khabardar invested *Kaumudi* with an aura rarely enjoyed by a Gujarati periodical. But partly because of the lack of desired response from the readership and partly because of the editor-publisher-owner's inability to manage his affairs well within his means, *Kaumudi* started gradually to deteriorate in form and content, turned itself into a monthly periodical after some time and stopped publication later on.

Vijayrai, after a brief pause, again started *Manasi*; but could never recapture the zest and spirit of the first couple of years of *Kaumudi* Quarterly.

Vijayrai's criticism is in good journalistic fashion. It is smart and impressionistic. With the passage of time, Vijayrai's prose style became increasingly involved and complex.

Vishvanath Maganlal Bhatt (1899-1968)

Vishvanath also is a critic of the Romantic School. He excels in comprehensive study and systematic analysis; and his prose style is chaste, lucid and perspicuous. He is orderly, frank and forthright. But his insight is not as original and penetration not as deep as those of Ramnarayan Pathak or Vishnuprasad Trivedi. In the last phase of his life, his critical judgement seemed sometimes to be clouded by prejudice; and he used to smell a rat where none existed.

Vishnuprasad Trivedi (1899)

Vishnuprasad Ranchhodlal Trivedi was born at Umreth in the Kaira District. Though he has written *Bhavana Srishti*, (1924), a miscellaneous collection of highly emotional literary pieces, he is best known as a critic. He has published five collections of articles in literary criticism: *Vivechana*, *Parishilana*, *Arvachin Chintanatmak Gadya*, *Upayan* and *Govardhanram Chintak ne Sarjak*.

Of these books, *Vivechana* and *Parishilan* are collections of critical articles, covering a variety of subjects, ranging from the estimate and appreciation of a stray literary work to the philosophic discussion of abstruse literary principles or some problem of philology.

Arvachin Chintanatmak Gadya is a collection of five lectures delivered by the author under the auspices of the Bombay University, in the Thakkar Vassonji Madhavji Lecture Series, in 1946. Over and above the five lectures of the series, the volume contains a valuable supplement discussing the romantic tendencies in modern Gujarati literature.

These lectures assess the essentials of reflective thought in Gujarati prose written during the years 1844 and 1905 A.D. It would, of course, be absurd to stick rigidly to upper or lower time limit in the discussion of a tendency or a thought that is alive. That is why some of the tendencies which gathered strength after 1905 or even 1920 have been discussed here in full length. In these lectures the author has neatly summed up and discussed the thought of all the major Gujarati thinkers from Durgaram Mahetaji to Anandshankar Dhruva.

Upayan, a felicitation volume, contains among other things articles discussing the essentials of poetry. Some of the articles are selected from *Vivechana* and *Parishilan*. The rest are anthologized for the first time.

Govardhanram-Chintak ne Sarjak is a collection of five lectures delivered in the Govardhanram Madhavram Tripathi Vyakhyana Mala of the Gujarat University in 1960. It is Vishnuprasad's contention that in spite of Govardhanram's lofty reflective thinking and able exposition of man's duty both towards himself and the society in the context of his times, directing him to a life based on the highest moral and ethical principles, Govardhanram is greater as a *Sarjak*—a creative artist than as a *Chintak*—a reflective thinker. In these lectures, Vishnuprasad has substantiated this contention by examining and discussing in depth Govardhanram's philosophy of life, his conception of a Man of Letters, his miscellaneous poems and *Snehamudra*, characteristic features of *Sarasvatichandra* and Govardhanram's manner of portryal and his prose style. These lectures are an important contribution to literature on Govardhanram.

Vishnuprasad excels in intimate contact with the masterpieces of creative and critical literature of the East and the West, perception of beauty, intellectual equipment and emotional refinement. Some of his earlier assessments like those of the poetry of Khabardar or Lalit or Kusumakar are controversial. But he is never slipshod, never superficial. He goes to the heart of the subject, does not bother about trivialities, but hardly allows anything significant to escape him. To him the basic principles underlying the facts are more important than the facts themselves. He has his eye fixed on the pole star of philosophic truth. He, thus, is nearer to Anandshankar than to any other Gujarati critic.

Prabhudas Chhaganlal Gandhi

Jivan-nun Parodh, (1948) an autobiography by Prabhudas Chhaganlal Gandhi is remarkable from more points of view than one. It not only gives us the details of the growth and development of the author, but it also presents before us a beautiful picture of Gandhiji in the making at the Phoenix Ashrama.

Gandhiji himself has written a history of the Satyagraha movement he launched in South Africa. He has written about it in his autobiography as well. Raojibhai Patel, a companion of Gandhiji at the Phoenix Ashrama, has told us much about Gandhiji's life and work in Africa, in his *Gandhiji-ni Sadhana* and *Jivan-nan Zaranan*. Still there is much in this book which is absolutely fresh and original and which only Prabhudas could give.

Jivan-nun Parodh transports us to those days of the Phoenix Ashrama, when Gandhiji was making his experiments with truth and non-violence which ultimately made him the phenomenon

that he became. It is an account of Gandhiji's persistent search for Truth and his endeavour after self-realization through service. It serves as an important landmark in the biographical literature about Gandhiji.

Over and above its utility as a reliable document dealing with this particular aspect, this book possesses the equally important merit of being a first-class depiction of the growth of a child's mind and of the perversities creeping therein. By virtue of its transparently sincere narration, the book contains much that is extremely useful to educationists and parents.

The author's self-confidence has been undermined since the days of his childhood. That is why he is more than modest in his estimate of himself. But his powerful and picturesque descriptions of nature, his portrayal of men and women he lived with in his childhood, his narration of events and incidents that made a permanent impact on his mind and his sound understanding of the human mind are so masterly that they would do credit to any talented author.

Batubhai Umarvadia (1899-1950)

Batubhai Lalbhai Umarvadia, who sometimes wrote under the pseudonym "Kamal" has written poems *Ras Anjali*, short stories: *Vato-nun Van*; impressionistic applied criticism: *Kirtida-ne Kamal-na Patro*; and one-act plays: *Matsyaganga ane Gangeya ane Bijan Natako* (1925) and *Maladevi ane Bijan Natako* (1927).

Of these, the one-act plays are Batubhai's most important contribution. His first one-act play *Lagna* was published in 1922 in *Chetan*, a monthly periodical of which he was editor. *Lomaharshini* also was written in the same year. His last one-act play *Shivalini* was published in 1927.

Not all Batubhai's plays are models of the *genre*. Some of them are, in fact, just dialogues, and few of them can stand close scrutiny of literary excellence and stageability.

Yet his is the work of a pioneer who brought to the notice of Gujarat the potentialities of the form.

Batubhai handled the form with utmost seriousness and gave to Gujarat serious one-act plays marked by smart dialogues and delineation of complex psychological problems.

Yashvant Savailal Pandya (1905-1955)

Yashvant Savailal Pandya, a contemporary of Batubhai, who wrote one-act plays during the period 1923-1933, serves as a complement to Batubhai.

Yashavant has his eye on stage-craft, Batubhai has none. Yashavant is light-hearted and has his dig at the hypocrisy of those who pose as leaders of society. He has also revelled in ridiculing great characters like Krishna²⁵, Shiva²⁶ and Brahma²⁶ of Hindu mythology. Batubhai is serious and though smart, is not essentially an iconoclast. Yashavant's plays are better specimens of form. Yashavant has also written full length plays *Madan Mandir*, *A.sou. Kumari*, *Sharat-na Ghoda etc.*

Jyotindra Dave (1901)

Jyotindra Hariharshankar Dave is by far the greatest humorist of Gujarat. He has written numerous articles and some humorous poems. He has also written *Ame Badhan*, a humorous novel in style of an autobiography, in collaboration with Dhansukhlal Mehta.

Jyotindra is a master of wit, humour and satire. His humour is based on human characters and situations; and it ranges from the grossest to the subtlest. His genius for humour is nursed by reading and by observation of human nature and behaviour.

Jyotindra's level of humour is not uniformly high or uniformly refined. His *Ranga Tarang*, in six parts, *Mari Nondhapothi* and *Alpatma-nun Atmapuran* are works representative of Jyotindra at his highest and the best. His subsequent writings display effort, longwindedness and repetitions.

Jyotindra's best essays are models of sharp intelligence, uncanny insight into the inconsistencies of human nature, refined taste, and cleverness. Pun, irony, mock-serious conceits and logical substantiation of an absurd proposition are some of the arms in Jyotindra's weaponry.

Jyotindra's humorous poems have few parallels in Gujarati literature. Many stanzas of the *Mangalashtakas*²⁶ composed by Jyotindra and his self-introduction *Atmaparichaya*, composed at the instance of the Gujarat Sahitya Sabha, Ahmedabad, on the occasion of the award of the Ranjitram Gold Medal to him, are excellent specimens of Jyotindra's sparkling wit and urbane humour.

Jyotindra has given in prose profiles of several well-known writers like Kaka Kalelkar, Kanaiyalal Munshi, Balvantrai Thakore and others. They evince Jyotindra's ability to under-

25. Brahma, Vishnu, of whom Krishna is an incarnation and Mahesha or Shiva, constitute the Hindu Trinity.

26. A composition of eight stanzas in *Shardoolavikreedita* metre invoking certain gods and super human elements to bestow their blessings on the bridal pair, recited at the time of marriage in certain Hindu Communities.

stand and assess the man, though there is nothing remarkable in these profiles so far as literary assessment is concerned. Jyotindra has also tried to discuss in depth some authors like Navalram, some forms like the drama and the one-act play, and some fundamentals of literature. They are interesting and readable but they fail to impress as works of sound scholarship marked by an originality of outlook or approach.

Chandravadan Mehta (1901)

Chandravadan Chimanlal Mehta was born in Surat. He has written poems, a novel, dramas, literary criticism, accounts of travels and autobiography. For the last several years he has been writing mostly about drama and about his travels.

Chandravadan was first known as a writer who, following Balvantrai Thakore wrote sonnets in Prithvi, a metre from classical Sanskrit, and published *Yamal*, a bunch of 14 sonnets having a thin thread of sentiment depicting the love of a brother for his sister running under them. Chandravadan's *Ilakavyo* (a collection of poems) and *Ratan* (a long narrative poem) are also poems of love between brother and sister. Some of his poems are good portrayals of a child's simplicity of heart, innocence and fantasy. But the sentiments of the brother as expressed in most of these poems come often very close to the sentiments of a lover for his lass. Chandravadan's poems are marked by excessive sentimentalism, looseness and haziness of thought, immature fancies and verbosity.

Chandravadan is distinguished as a dramatist, an actor, a producer, and a student of the form and technique of drama.

Except for Ranchhodbhai Udayaram whose dramas were an unqualified success on the stage, and Manilal Nabhubhai Dvivedi, whose *Kanta* was staged as the inaugural performance of Mumbai Gujarati Natak Company, there has rarely been any liaison between literary dramas and stage plays. The professional dramatic companies had their own playwrights to whom stage-ability was the *sine qua non* of a good drama; and they had their exclusive audience too. But with the spread of education and the cultural renaissance in the Gandhian Era there came into existence a class who demanded a higher standard of literary excellence, which the professional stage was incapable of providing. This gave rise to the amateur stage and Chandravadan Mehta and Kanaiyalal Munshi, each in his own way and independently of the other, did much to popularise it with their plays and guidance. They succeeded in getting the educated elite interested in the amateur stage. But their efforts to popularise the movement could hardly rise much beyond the level of

popular entertainment. Most of the dramas they put on the stage were either cheap sentimental stuff or crude farces.

But the Gujarati Amateur Stage came to stay. The dramas produced or directed by Pravin Joshi, Kanti Madia, Upendra Trivedi, Chandravandan Bhatt, Lalu Shah, Vishnukumar Vyas and others, though mostly adaptations from other languages, are excellent productions and professionally very successful. The standards of the audience, which resents being treated like adolescents any longer, are also very exacting.

Chandravandan's dramas cover a wide variety of types. There are idealistic plays like *Aradhana*, realistic plays like *Agagadi* and *Naga Bava*, character plays like *Akho* and *Narmad*, pantomimes like *Kismet*, farces like *Mugi stri*, romances like *Anal De*, idylls like *Prem-nun Moti*, satires like *Dedkan-ni Panchsheri*, historical plays like *Sandhyakal*, operas like *Kalyan* and folk-drama based on the model of bhavai, *Ho-Holika*. The range of characters from beggars and peddlers to the author himself and from the mundane to the divine is also fairly wide. Almost all of these dramas are staged by amateur artists with varying degrees of success.

Chandravandan's dramas are remarkable for their novelty of plot and for their dialogues in language to the cultural level of the characters. But they lack symmetry and coherence. Chandravandan's light dramas very often sink to the level of a crude farce and his serious dramas turn often into an ill-knit series of sentimental or pompous dialogues.

Chandravandan's talent for the dramatic is put to its best use, not in his dramas, but in his autobiography and travelogues. In spite of their verbosity and hyperboles, these books are remarkable for their prose which is often at its best when descriptive or narrative. It creates before the reader, pictures of places, and portraits of men and women, and unfolds the personality of the author, which in spite of his occasional bitterness and moodiness is lovable.

Gunvantrai Popatbhai Acharya (1902-1965)

Gunvantrai Popatbhai Acharya was a noted journalist. He is known for his social novels like *Daridranarayan*, *Kori Kitab*, etc. and historical novels like *Desh-Diwan*, *Krishnaji Nayak*, *Rai Bukkarai*, *Maha-amatya Madhav* etc. He is however, distinguished for his novels of sea-faring adventures like *Sakkarbar*, *Jala-samadhi*, *Harari*, *Sarfarosh* and others of the same milieu.

Gunvantrai is a good story-teller and aims at nothing beyond telling a good story. He attempts to create some grand historical incidents and historical characters who strive to realize some

great and unique dream. He is influenced by Munshi in his characterization and by Meghani in his style and glamorization of the past. The authenticity of his historical data is often controversial.

The picture of life on and across the oceans, given by "Sukani"—*Chandrashankar Amritlal Buch* (1896-1958) in his stories *Hadkivari Aai*, *Dhudakiya Ban*, *Sagavan-nun Hatyan* and *Azad Armar* (Bengal) and in his novel *Devo Dhadhal* are authentic and powerfully drawn. Buch was a scholar and a recognized authority on navigation. *Devo Dhadhal*, therefore contains a good deal of authentic information about life at sea and at ports. The use of Cutchi dialect and the sailor's terminology and jargon add to the local colour. But the use is slightly overdone and the creative ability of the author is not of a consistently high order.

Karsandas Manek (1902-1978)

Karsandas Narasimha Manek who wrote satirical poems under the pseudonym of "Vaishampayan" was born in Karachi (now in Pakistan).

Manek has written poetry: *Albel*; *Madhyahna*; *Vaishampayan-ni Vani*, two parts; *Mahobat-ne Mandve*; *Rama*, *Taro Divado*; *Aho Ravaji Suniye*; *Shatabdi-nun Smito ane Ashruo*; *Kalyana yatri*; novels: *Darpan ane Samarpan*; *Sindhu-nun Svapna*; etc. short stories: *Malini*; *Prakasha-nan Pagalan*; etc. verse drama: *Pratijna Purushottama*; *Dharmakshetre Kurukshetre*. reflective prose: *Vatna Divada*; *Gita Vichar*; *Kalio ane kusumo*; *Azadi-ni Yajnajwala*; narrative prose: *Mahabharat Katha* three parts. Besides, Manek has translated among others, *Muktadhara* and *Sharadutsava* from Bengali; *Othello* from English and *Bhagavad Gita* from Sanskrit.

Of these *Albel* and *Madhyahna* are collections of Manek's poems, including a beautiful elegy, *Khakh-nan Poyanan* in the *Albel*. *Mahobat-ne Mandve* is a long love poem. Two parts of *Vaishampayan-ni Vani* and *Aho Ravaji Suniye* are collections of satirical poems written in the style of mediaeval akhyanas. *Rama*, *Taro Divado* is a collection of devotional songs; *Shatabdi-nan Smito ane Ashruo*, published in the Gandhi centenary year, is a collection of poems depicting national sentiments and *Kalyana yatri* is an eloquent tribute to Mahatma Gandhi.

Pratijna Purushottama is a one-act play in verse depicting the final hours of Shri Krishna on this earth and a review of the mission accomplished by Him. *Dharmakshetre Kurukshetre* is a collection of seven "Padya Natikas (short dramas in verse) elucidating the essence of the Gita.

In Prose, *Vat-na Divada* (the lamps on the Road) is a collection of 42 short essays, interpreting some of the great sayings of some of the greatest works of Indian philosophic thought. *Gita Vichar* is a collection of fifty essays bringing out the pith of the *Bhagavad Gita*. The interpretations in both the works are in the context of life in modern times. They are ingenious.

The *Mahabharat Katha* is a lucid and artistic narration of the story of the great Indian epic. It contains shrewd references to the situation in post-independence India.

Manek, like Meghani, is essentially a man of the masses. The flow of his diction intersperses with appropriate Sanskrit, Persian and colloquial Gujarati words is smooth and easy. Rhymes come naturally to him; and his command over metres is perfect. Manek has written songs, bhajans, sonnets, gazals, and longer narrative poems. His poems depicting, in the best journalistic fashion, emotions stirred by major national events and the post-independence disillusionment and frustration have few parallels in Gujarati literature.

Manek's love poems, though written in classical Sanskrit metres, often remind one of the gusto and spirit of abandon of Urdu gazals. Besides his *Khakh-nan Poyanan* and *Kalyana yatri*, his *Vyasa*, a panegyric addressed to the great author of the *Mahabharata* and many of his shorter poems like *Hari-nan Lochaniyan* (the eyes of Hari), *Jyotidham* (the Abode of Light), *Jay Jaganath* (Hail to Thee, Lord of the Universe!) etc. are among his best.

Manek is always at his highest pitch. His poetry and much of his prose too, are marked by warmth, abandon of emotion, powerful eloquence and perspicuity of style.

Satirical poems are Manek's contribution to Gujarati literature. These poems are written in the style of mediaeval akhyanas. By their brilliant wit and satires they relieved some of the tension of the people during the period of the Second World War. Manek, the intellectual, the patriot, and the man of the masses with a fine sense of humour, was at his freshest and the best in these poems. It is a recognition of Manek's contribution that almost all other daily periodicals of Bombay and Gujarat started and many of them are still running columns like this. Because of their topicality these poems have, of course, no permanent literary value. But history cannot ignore their contribution unless at its own peril.

Dolarrai Rangildas Mankad (1902-1970)

Mankad has written 20 books of which *Studies in Dhananjaya's Dasharupakam*, *Types of Sanskrit Drama*, *Ancient Indian*

Theatre, Puranic Chronology, Date of the Rigveda and *Kalidasa and the Guptas* in English and *Kavya Vivechan, Gujarati Kavya Prakaro* and *Sahityamimansa-na Be Prashno* in Gujarati establish him as a scholar of Dramatics, Poetics, Aesthetics, and Indology in general. Mankad has also written *Bhagavan-ni Lila*, a long narrative poem, and translated *Bhagavadajjukiya, Rudradhyaya, Shakradistuti* and *Dhvanyaloka* from Sanskrit. Mankad's articles in English were published in leading learned periodicals of India.

Mankad edited with Chandrashankar Buch as coeditor *Nagarik*, a scholarly, monthly periodical and ran it for seven years. He also was a coeditor with Indulal Gandhi, Bhavani-shankar Vyas and Chamankal Gandhi, of *Urmi*, a literary monthly periodical, published from Karachi. Its two "Kavyankas"—annual poetry numbers—published in 1935 and 1936 with Mankad's brief illuminating comments on the poems, had set standards of literary taste and judgement in Gujarat.

As a literary critic, Mankad maintained a very high standard of personal integrity and objectivity. He has expressed without fear or favour only that which he, in his considered judgement, felt to be true.

Sneharashmi (1903)

Jhinabhai Ratanji Desai, who writes under the pseudonym "Sneharashmi", was born in Chikhli, Valsad district. He has written poetry: *Arghya; Panghat; Soneri Chand Ane Ruperi Suraj; Atitani Pankhmanthi*, short stories: *Tutelatar; Gata Asopalav; Svarga ane Prithvi; Hira-nan Latkaniyan*; a novel: *Antarpat*; and autobiography: *Mari Duniya*.

Patriotic poetry had started to be written since the days of Narmad and Dalpatram; and long before Gandhiji's return from South Africa, Harilal Harshadrai Dhruva and Lalit (Janmashankar Mahashankar Buch) had written poems beginning with the lines

"This land is ours, this mother of ours,
who else dare call her his own²⁷,

and "Let us resound the auspicious victory of the dear land of our birth²⁸", respectively.

But after Gandhiji's arrival, when the movement's base was broadened, there came a new spurt in patriotism; and Sneharashmi was one of the first poets who sang about it. He has

27. आ भूमि अमारी, मैया अमारी, कोण अवर कहेशे निजनी ?

28. जय मंगल प्रिय जन्मभूमिनुं गजाविये.

written poems of patriotism, poems denouncing exploitation of the poor and the helpless, long reflective poems, love poems and lyrics, sonnets and muktakas.

Sneharashmi is an idealist with an abiding faith in the inherent vitality of the people; and the ultimate progress of human culture. The pictures of grim realism seen in the poetry of some of his contemporaries are conspicuous by their absence in Sneharashmi.

Some of Sneharashmi's long reflective poems like *Ekoham Bahu Syam* are remarkable for their pregnancy of meaning and dignified diction. But he excels in the depiction of emotion. Sneharashmi's eleven poems, of which ten are sonnets, written on the death of an intimate friend, and which were first published in the *Prasthan* under the caption *Smaran Samhita*²⁹, are marked by a happy blending of emotion and reflection. His melodious lyrics, somewhat influenced by Tagore's mysticism are among his best.

Soneri Chand une Ruperi Suraj is a collection of Sneharashmi's Haikus. Sneharashmi is among the first to bring this Japanese form into Gujarati; and there are others, too, who did not lag behind in composing Haikus. But in view of the fact that every ethnic group responds to outside influences only in accordance with its own, what Lytton Strachey calls, "habits of thoughts and of taste" and accepts only that which it can assimilate, time only will tell if the Haiku strikes its roots in Gujarati poetry as forms of short story and one-act play have done in prose or meets the fate of the blank verse, borrowed from English and the ovi, lavani, abhanga, and dindi, metres borrowed from our next door neighbour Marathi, and the one-act play written only in dialects.

In view of the fact that it has been used by many talented writers and has been a vehicle of some of our best poetry, the sonnet is the only form in metrical composition, imported from abroad, that can reasonably be called to have stabilized in Gujarati. But its elaborate rhyme-schemes are largely done away with.

In *Nija Lila*, a cluster of eight poems in *Atita-ni Pankhmanthi*, Sneharashmi tries to break new ground. These poems are, in the style of some of the modern poems, a mere excursion in the realm of rhyme and rhythm, with nothing whatsoever to convey.

Sneharashmi's short stories are the workmanship of a poet. They are based on emotions and written in the romantic style. Death plays a major role in many of them.

29. These poems are anthologized in *Arghya*, pages 173 to 183.

Antarpat is a story of the eternal triangle, at each of the ends of which stand Pani, Keshu and Narhari. The love of Pani for both Keshu and Narhari forms the core of the novel. Her love for Narhari is instinctive and natural, the remembrance of which stands as an "antarpat"—a curtain—between the union of her heart with that of Keshu, whom she tries to love devoutly.

The story is set in the *milieu* of a village in Gujarat at the time of the First World War. Many important political, sociological and educational problems of the day have been discussed and analyzed here. But this discussion has, as a matter of fact, no vital connection with the development of the plot, nor does it, in any way, affect the relation that develops between Pani, Keshu and Narhari.

The author has not been able to evince any extraordinary talent for characterisation. Nor is there anything remarkable in his sense of humour. But his description and narrations are powerful, and there is a tendency to direct to greater idealism the characters who are already cast in an idealistic mould.

Sneharashmi's autobiography *Mari Duniya* provides interesting pictures of the village life of which he was a part in his childhood and later on the life in Bombay where he was a student. Only the first part of the book is published so far.

Nagindas Narandas Parekh (1903)

Nagindas Narandas Parekh is a noted translator and critic. He has translated many books from Bengali, including the *Gitanjali*, *Ghare Bahire*, *Visarjan*, *Raja*, *Pujarini* and *Dak Ghar* by Tagore; *Parinita*, *Palli Sama*; and *Chandranath* by Sharat Chandra Chatterji; and *Kavya vichar* of Surendra Nath Dasgupta. He has also translated from English some books including the *Among the Great (Tirthasalila)* by Dilip Kumar Roy and *Kalki* by Dr. S Radhakrishnan. Nagindas's translations are conscientiously done. They are faithful to the original, though they miss some flavour of the poetry of the original, if they happen to be works of creative literature.

As a critic, Nagindas is precise, thorough going and frank. He excels in his studies of specific topics of the theory of literature.

Sundarji Betai (1904)

Sundarji Gokaldas Betai was born in Bet, near Dwarka.

Betai has written poetry and literary criticism. He has also translated the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Dhammapada*, some cantos of the *Mahabharata* and Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*.

Betai's poems are collected in seven volumes: *Jyotirekha*, *Indradhanu*, *Visheshanjali*, *Tulsidal*, *Vyanjana*, *Anu-Vyanjana*,

Shishire Vasant. He has also written *Sadgat Chandrashila-ne*. His articles on literary criticism are collected in *Suvarnamegha*.

Of these, *Jyotirekha* is a collection of five khandkavyas. Betai has written two elegies: *Indradhanu* and *Sadgata Chandrashila-ne*. *Indradhanu*, the title poem of the book *Indradhanu*, is an elegy written on the death of a son and *Sadgata Chandrashila-ne* is an elegy written on the death of his wife. It has been later included in the *Tulsidal*.

Betai's khandakavyas in particular and earlier poetry in general bear a distinct impact of Narasimharao's poetry. His elegies are marked by nobility of thought and chastity of diction.

High seriousness, control of emotions, sobriety, maturity of reflection and a basic faith in the dispensation not of a personal God, but of the Ultimate Reality from which everything springs and in which everything subsides, are some distinct characteristics of Betai's poetry.

Betai's first book *Jyotirekha* was published in 1934; and his latest collection of poems, *Shishire Vasant*, in 1976. Betai's poetry, in spite of its controlled expression, serves somewhat as a chart of what the poet has passed through emotionally in the course of this half century. It also registers some of the poet's reactions to the major events that shook India and the world and changed the course of history. They reveal the poet's fine sensitivity.

In spite of an occasional mood of elation and happiness, there is an unmistakable ring of disenchantment in Betai's poetry. The poet loves to view nature as a back-drop to human emotions and to enjoy its various forms and moods. And as it usually happens in his later poems, he loves to recall to mind the experiences of his childhood. Betai's poems reminiscent of the days of his childhood are particularly poignant.

Many of Betai's earlier lyrics and bhajans are pieces of excellent poetry and exquisite workmanship. The later day lyrics often tend to be verbose and word play.

Betai's articles collected in *Suvarnamegha* bear testimony to his insight and understanding of literature. His judgement is sound and his expression of opinions is mild and restrained. Betai's translation of the *Walden* is a Sahitya Akademi publication.

Keshavram Shastri (1905)

Keshavram Kashiram Shastri is a distinguished scholar of grammar, philology, Apabhramsha, old and mediaeval Gujarati

poetry and Indology in general. He is well versed in the literature of the Pushti Marga of Vallabhacharya.

Shastri has brought to light many mediaeval poets and works, challenged many old theories about almost everything ranging from the rules of orthography and pronunciations to the accepted dates of many poets like Narasimha, Miranbai, Premanand and others, and advanced his own theories. There is virtually no aspect of mediaeval literature that Shastri has not touched and no accepted estimate of it that he has not revised.

Shastri is a prolific writer. He has written books on grammar, prosody, linguistics, history of literature etc. He has written *Kavi Charit* in two parts, which should serve as valuable source material for a future historian to write a detailed History of Mediaeval Literature.

Shastri has edited a number of books, such as the *Kadambari* of Bhalan.

Shastri has translated the portion dealing with the Apabhramsha grammar in the *Siddha-Hema*. The translation is, at several places, inaccurate.

He has also translated three dramas of Kalidasa. *Abhijnana Shakuntala*, *Malavikagnimitra* and *Vikramorvasiya*. The translation fails to give one an idea of the genius that made Kalidasa the greatest poet of India. Shastri has also translated some dramas of Bhasa.

Indefatigability and enthusiasm are the keynotes of Shastri's work. Despite his limitations of equipment and training, Shastri is the only writer who has done so much in so many directions of old and mediaeval Gujarati literature.

Mansukhlal Jhaveri (1907)

Mansukhlal Maganlal Jhaveri was born in Jamnagar.

He has written poetry: *Chandraduta*, *Phooldol*, *Aradhana*, *Anubhuti*, *Kavya Sushama*, *Doomo Ogalyo*; Criticism: *Thoda Vivechanlekho*, *Paryeshana*, *Kavya Vimarsha*, *Abhigam*, *Govardhanram*, *Nanlal*, *Kanaiyalal Munshi*, *Umashankar Joshi*, *Balvant-rai Thakore*, *Gujarati Bhasha-Sahitya*, *Gandhiyuga-nun Sahitya Nanlal—Jivan ane Kavan*, *Apanan Urmikavyo*, *Apano Kavita Vaibhav*, two parts; history: *Gujarati Sahitya-nun Rekhadarshan*, in collaboration with Dr. Ramanlal C. Shah; Gujarati Grammar: *Gujarati Bhasha—Vyakarana ane Lekhan*, *Bhasha-Parichaya*, four parts; account of Travels: *America-Mari Drishtiye*; profiles *Chitrankan*.

Mansukhlal has also edited several books including *Gujarati Tunki Varta*. He has translated from Sanskrit: *Abhijnana Shakuntala* by Kalidasa; and *Bhagvad Gita*; and from

English: *Hamlet*; *Othello*; George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and Jawaharlal Nehru's *India-Today and Tomorrow*.

Chandraduta is an imitation of the *Meghaduta* of Kalidasa. Other books of poetry except *Doomo Ogalyo* are collections of lyrics, sonnets, descriptive and narrative poems, khandakavyas, elegies, and longer narrative poems, including the *Mahaprasthan*, dealing with some episodes of the Kurukshetra, the Mahabharata War. *Doomo Ogalyo* (1975) is Mansukhlal's latest collection of poems depicting the sense of futility and sadness pervading the heart in old age.

Of the books of criticism, *Kavya Vimarsha* represents Mansukhlal's conception, the why and how of literature. *Govardhanram*, *Nanalal*, *Kanaiyalal Munshi*, *Umashankar Joshi* and *Balvantrai Thakore* are collections of Mansukhlal's articles and studies of major works of these authors.

Gujarati Bhasha-Sahitya is a collection of three lectures delivered by the author in the Kamalashankar Praishankar Trivedi Lecture series under the auspices of the South Gujarat University; *Gandhi Yuga-nun Sahitya*, a collection of five lectures in the Thakkar Vassonji Madhavji Lecture Series under the auspices of the Bombay University and *Nanalal-Jivan ane Kavan*, a collection of three lectures delivered under the auspices of the Saurashtra University. *Thoda Vivechanlekho*, *Paryeshana* and *Abhigam* are collections of articles on some principles of literature, books and authors and historical development of some literary forms.

Apanan Urmikavyo and *Apano Kavita Vaibhav* in two parts, were serialized in the *Mumbai Samachar*, a noted Gujarati daily periodical from Bombay. In the two parts of *Apano Kavita-Vaibhav* one poem each of 150 poets starting from Govardhanram to the present day poet, have been explained; and in *Apanan Urmikavyo*, 50 poems of poets from Narsimha Mehta to Narmad and Dalpatram have been explained. *Apanan Urmikavyo* was serialized after the *Apano Kavita-Vaibhav* and the rule of only one poem per author is not observed in that anthology.

Mansukhlal's books on grammar are based on the models of Sanskrit and English grammars; and they also deal with topics of composition.

America-Mari Drishtiye (America—As I saw it) is an account of travels, serialized in the *Mumbai Samachar*, under the caption "*America-na Patro* (letters from America).

Chitrangan is a collection of profiles of several literary men and some of the author's personal relations.

Gujarati Tunki Varta a collection of 16 Gujarati short stories and the translation of *Hamlet* are published by the Sahitya Akademi; and *Bharat—Ajune ane Avatikal* (*India Today and Tomorrow*) is a National Book Trust Publication.

Gujarati Tunki Varta has been translated into Tamil.

In the words of Prof. Vishnuprasad Trivedi, "Critics of reputation consider the work of Mansukhlal Jhaveri in poetry, translation and criticism as of a high order. He has, in their opinion, a classical taste in poetry. He is keen and judicious in criticism. And his range of interest and sympathies is very wide. His translation of *Hamlet* is a very noteworthy achievement. He is warm and sensitive but neither in poetry nor in criticism does he lose sense of proportion and of truth."

Sundaram (1908)

Tribhuvandas Purushottam Luhar, known only as Sundaram, was born in Miyan Matar near Broach.

Having graduated from the Gujarat Vidyapith, he worked for some time as a teacher in an Ahmedabad school. Since 1945, he settled as a Sadhaka at Shri Aurobindo Ashrama, Pondicherry.

Sundaram has written poetry: *Koya Bhagat-ni Kadvi Vani*, *Kavyamangala*, *Ranga Ranga Vadaliyan*, *Vasudha*, *Yatra*; short stories: *Hirakani ane Biji Vato*, *Unnayana*; Criticism: *Arvachin Kavita*, *Avalokana*, *Chidambara*; an account of travels: *Dakshinayana*. He has also translated from Sanskrit *Mrichchhakatika* of Shoodraka and *Bhagavadajjukyam*, a farce by Bodhayana; and from English *Transfiguration* and *Masses And Men* of Ernst Toller and some portions of *Savitri* and of other great works of Shri Aurobindo. Since 1947, Sundaram is editing a quarterly periodical *Dakshina*.

Koya Bhagat-ni Kadvi Vani ane Garibo-nan Gito (1933) is a collection of poems by a sensitive soul thoroughly disillusioned with the state of affairs in society where the poor are mercilessly exploited and the rich roll in luxury. The poet is convinced that these irrational and unjust class distinctions are accepted as Providential dispensation. He, therefore, asks God:

With threatening eyes, red with anger, Koya Bhagat³⁰ asks you: We have borne with you for ages on end. Now, what business have you here³¹?

The contents of the poems are strongly influenced by radical thoughts and ideology of the early thirties; but the language, the

30. Koyo means nagging and Bhagat, in imitation of mediaeval poets.

31. कोया भगत एना आंखना डोळा फाडी फाडी तने पूछे:
जुगना जुग तने राखी जोयो, हवे काम तारं अहीं शुं छे ?

style, and finish of the poems show an unmistakable touch of a genuine poet.

Kavyamangala (1933) though published in the same year as the *Koya Bhagat-ni Kadvi Vani*, is qualitatively different from it. The order of dismissal served on God in *Kadvi Vani* was not an order of an atheist; it was an order of one who was convinced that mankind has largely misunderstood the nature of God and His Will. The poet's own conception of God is that of an all-pervading Trinity of Satya, Shiva and Sundara who has established the world in Satya, or Truth (the world is not a Maya, an illusion; it is real, true); who brings it up with only its Shiva, or Good, at heart and who makes it a delight to live in by means of Saundarya, that is Beauty³². And with an abiding faith in His dispensation, the poet unfurls his sails in the ocean of life. The poems of the *Kadvi Vani*, like *Tran Padoshi*, *Bhangadi*, *Titodi ane Sagar* etc. which have also been included in this book are not direct outbursts of vehemence at social injustice, but they are those that point to social injustice suggestively by narration of anecdotes or incidents.

Kavyamangala is the first collection of poems embodying in full measure the spirit of the Gandhian Era. In lyricism, reflection, vision and execution, it came like a fresh breeze of air.

In *Vasudha* (the Earth) (1939) the poet comes down to the *Terra Firma* from the auspicious realm of *Kavya*, (poetry; imagination). As a matter of fact, the coming down had already started in the *Kavya-Pranasha*—the ruin of the *Kavya*—of the *Kavya Mangala*. *Vasudha* contains some of the most exquisite poems of unfulfilled love in Gujarati Literature. It also contains some of the most beautiful poems of realism, like “13.7 ni Local” and “Intala”, written more in sorrow than in anger, out of compassion for mankind. “13.7 ni Local” is also remarkable for its picture of a wayside railway station at noon, when the local train stopping at all stations is due to arrive.

Yatra (the Pilgrimage) (1951) is a collection of poems depicting the pilgrim's progress in the realm of spiritualism. From *Kavya-mangala's*

It would be enough if I, a man brought up on the lap of Mother Earth, be a man³³.

32. सत्ये स्थापी, उछेरीने शिव थकी, सौन्दर्यधारे रसे,
वन्दुं ए त्रिगुणे लसंत विभुने सत्यं शिवं सुन्दरम्.

33. पृथ्वी उछंगे उछरेल मानवी
हुं मानवी मानव थाऊं तो घणुं.

To *yatra's*

O Body mine!

From all thy ten limbs

Chaitanya throbs and flows like
ten tongued fire; and gets dissipated

Collect those flames of fire into
hands folded in reverence.

Thus collected and unified, that
strong flame will burn to ashes
thy woods of ego; and become a
peak from which to launch thy
ascent into that which is
beyond cognizance³⁴.

is a far cry. The subject matter is changed; and so is the style. There is not that variety of metres and combinations of metres seen in the *Kavyamangala* and the *Vasudha*. The diction, though, perspicuous is rather heavy. But the poet is there with all his faculties unimpaired and alert. This being yet a "yatra", the journey, not the journey's end, the poet's conflicts within himself, and the unbearable agony of unfulfilled love embodied as for instance in poems like *Raghav-mun Hridaya* and *Phool Didhun* remind one of Arnold's lines—

These things, Ulysses,

The wise bards also

Behold and sing.

But O, what labour!

O Prince, what pain!

The range of Sundaram's sympathy is very extensive. His poetry moves with equal ease in the fields of emotion, sentiment, reflection and thought. And his style is marked by propriety, sincerity, frankness and directness.

Sundaram's short stories are realistic, though many of them lack artistic perfection. His *Kholki* (a female young one of a donkey), which had for some time generated a lot of heat in Gujarat and branded by purists as obscene, is one of the finest realistic stories in Gujarati.

34. हे अंग मारा !

तारां दशे अग्र थकी शरीरनी

चैतन्यधारा दशजिह्व वहिशी

स्फुरे वहे. ए विखराइ जाती

ज्वालावली संपुटमां तुं बांधी ले.

बंधायली ए दृढ ज्योत बाळशे

तारा अहंनां वन, ने अगम्यमां

आरोहवा क्षेपनटोच ए थशे.

Sundaram's account of travels *Dakshinayana* is a narration of the author's tour of South India. Its style is heavy at places and it has not the charm of Kakasaheb's *Himalaya-no Pravas*. But its numerous similes, graphic descriptions, its grace and elegance, its serious reflection and healthy patriotism bear an unmistakable stamp of Sundaram's genius.

Sundaram's *Arvachin Kavita* is an outline of the history of modern Gujarati poetry. It covers the period 1845-1945. Sundaram has read with sympathy and understanding almost every line of poetry written during the period, even from the old files of defunct magazines and school text books and assessed the poetry and major authors of the period upto about 1930 and discussed only the trends of the new poetry of the post-1930 period³⁵. The work is unique and unparalleled in Gujarati literature so far.

Avalokana is a collection of prefaces and introductions Sundaram wrote for some budding writers, the review of books published during 1941 done for the Gujarat Sahitya Sabha, and notices and reviews of books he wrote for his college magazine *Sabaramati*, while he was a student. There are few articles in *Avalokana* which may be called studies in the real sense of the term. Sundaram's opinions about authors like Balvantrai Thakore, Nanalal, Meghani, Sneharashmi and Ramanlal Desai are, at best, controversial. But Sundaram, with his objectivity and frankness, fearlessness, and forthright unequivocal expression of opinions, is very much there.

Chidambara also is a collection of Sundaram's light and serious miscellaneous articles.

Gulabdas Broker (1909)

Gulabdas Harjivandas Broker was born in Porbandar.

Broker has written short stories: *Lata ane Biji Vato*, *Vasundhara ane Biji Vato*, *Ubhi Vate*, *Surya*, *Prakash-nun smit*, *Manas-nan Man*, *Jivan-nan Amrit*, *Bhitar-nan Jivan*, *Prem-Padarath*; true stories: *Punya Paravaryun Nathi*, *Hari-no Marag*, *Amrit Diksha*; drama: *Dhoomraser*, *Mana-nan Bhoot*; one-act plays: *Jvalant Agni*; poetry: *Vasante*; Criticism: *Roopasrishti*.

35. 1931 saw the publication of *Vishvashanti* of Umashankar Joshi, which is the starting point of the new trend in poetry, known as the poetry of the Gandhian Era. *Vishvashanti* is one single poem of the type of a khandakavya. The first collections of poems of the poets of the Gandhian Era were published in 1933-34, though poems embodying the new trends had started getting published in literary periodicals, as Sundaram points out, since 1922.

man; *Abhivyakti*; travels: *Nava Gagan-ni Niche*. He has, besides, translated several stories from English and Hindi; he has also translated *Ghosts* (Bhutaval) by Ibsen for the Sahitya Akademi, and edited several books including the *Gujarati-nan Ekanki*.

Gujarati-nan Ekanki, also for the Sahitya Akademi, has been translated into Hindi and Tamil. Several of Broker's stories are translated into Hindi, Marathi, Malayalam, Sindhi, English and some European Languages.

Broker, though a contemporary of Umashankar, Sundaram and Pannalal Patel, did not turn towards the village and the lower strata of society as they did; but portrayed the sex-propelled life largely of young men and women belonging to the upper middle class families of large cities. Having an uncanny insight into the working of the human mind, Broker portrayed in his stories the currents and cross-currents at its depth from which all behaviour springs. Broker has seen life around him with an open mind and with sympathy, and tried to fathom its depths, understand the intricacy of its working and give it as best as he can a local habitation and a name.

Broker is an excellent story teller with a sense of drama, though his tempo is usually slow.

Broker's *Lata Shun Bole*, (what could Lata speak) one of his early stories, is a story of two men—Suresh and Niranjana—and one woman—Lata. Lata, the wife of Suresh seduces Niranjana, the friend of them both. Niranjana, unable to go on betraying his friend by continuing his clandestine relationship with Lata, or else make a clean breast of everything before Suresh and ruin the life of Lata, leaves the town and disappears.

That a monthly periodical of the quality of *Prasthan*, edited by no less a person than Ramnarayan Pathak should publish a story like this with its theme of adultery was in those days of the thirties³⁶ a subject of some bitter comment. But Sundaram was provoked to continue the story from where Broker had left it. And then Yashvant Pandya, Ramanlal Soni, Jethalal Trivedi, Chandravadan Mehta and Bhogilal Gandhi joined the fray and continued the story by contributing one chapter each. Ramanlal Desai was called upon to write the concluding chapter of the story; and all the eight chapters were published in the form of a book entitled *Lata*, with an introduction—one of the smartest and cleverest pieces of composition—by Umashankar Joshi.

This experiment in producing a book by collective authorship was not the first of its kind in Gujarat. Munshi's *Gujarat*

36. The story was published in 1936.

had published a similar composition earlier. And *Gujarat*, in its turn, had followed an earlier experiment made in Bengali.

Broker's one-act plays are very well-contrived. They, too, like his short stories are based on seemingly ordinary episodes of life of men and women belonging to the higher middle class; and they too very dramatically offer a subtle insight into the working of a character's mind, which throws the entire episode into a new perspective and offers the reader a glimpse of the complexity that is human life.

Of Broker's plays, *Dhoomraser* is the dramatization, by himself in collaboration with Dhansukhlal Mehta, of one of his own short stories of the same caption. The play ably portrays the multiplicity of motives—some noble, some not so noble, and some, at times, mutually conflicting, that drive men to great sacrifices and heroic acts. The characters of Kamalnayan, the father who deliberately nursed patriotism in his only son Bipin which led him (Bipin) to the terrorist movement and subsequently to gallows in a British jail, and of his wife, Nilima, every inch a mother, are well-drawn.

Mana-nan Bhoot deals with the theme of jealousy. Here is the conflict between man's intellect that decides to forgive and forget the lapse of his wife, and his heart, which driven by the possessive instinct refuses to face with equanimity betrayal and defeat, and which ultimately has the better of the two. The language of Broker is not as adequate to portray powerful emotions and wild outbursts of furious passions as it is for cool and deliberate calculation, persuasion and analysis.

Broker's literary criticism largely consists of discussion about some fundamentals of the theory of literature such as form and content; or the "eternal" and the "ephemeral" in literature. Broker is a well read man, always trying to keep in touch with the latest in fiction in Gujarati as well as the Western literature. His grasp of the essentials is strong; his judgement, sound; his style, rather longwinded. Broker has an unerring eye for talent. A number of authors introduced by him have already made their mark in literature.

Broker's account of travels *Nava Gagan-ni Niche* is a narration of his European tour which he made in 1959. Instead of doing places in a routine way, Broker meets people and knows about them and their way of life. His book, in this way, distinguishes itself from other books on European travel. The book unfolds at every stage the personality of the author, a shrewd practical businessman, an intelligent observer, suave companion, an interesting conversationalist and a short story writer.

Broker's *Amrit Diksha* is a collection of his memoirs. His reminiscences of his mother, Rao Saheb Patvardhan, Sarojini Naidu, Balvantrai Thakore, Bhimo and Yashwant Pandya are very interesting.

His true stories *Punya Paravaryun Nathi* narrate several real incidents of life that Broker had heard from others whom he personally knew. These incidents point to the brighter side of life and seek to reassure the reader that all is not still lost. Here, as well as in *Amrit Diksha*, it is the short story writer who is at work.

Amas-na Tara by Kishansinh Chavda, telling about persons or incidents the author has personally known; *Manavata nan Jharanan* by Ganesh Vasudev Mavalankar telling about the nobility and some excellent human qualities he had personally observed in criminals like dacoits and murderers; *Manasai-na Diva* by Jhaverchand Meghani reproducing in his own way what Ravishankar Maharaj, one of the tallest men Gujarat has produced, told him about his (Maharaj's) experiences among tribes that had been traditionally branded as criminal; and *Satya Kathao* by Mukund Parasharya, a poet, telling about life that was lived till yesterday and might be obtaining even today in some small sections of society where truth, honesty, self-chosen poverty, self-sacrifice, self-respect and nobility are not mere copy-book maxims, but the salt of life, are books belonging to this category.

Jayanti Dalal (1909-1970)

Jayanti Ghelabhai Dalal has written One-act plays: *Javanika*, *Pravesh Bijo*, *Trijo Pravesh* and *Chotho Pravesh*; Novels: *Padar-nan Tirath*; *Dhimu ane Vibha*; Short stories: *Jujavan*; *Aa Gher Pele Gher*; *Adkhe Padkhe*. Dalal has also translated, among others George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and Tolstoy's *War And Peace*, a magnificent achievement.

Dalal is perhaps the one author who has made the maximum number of experiments in the form of the one-act play. His close association with the stage has stood him in good stead in these experiments:

Dalal has made various experiments with the form of short story as well. Many of the roots of the post-1955 short story can be traced to Dalal's short stories.

Dalal's *Dhimu ane Vibha* (1943) marks the beginning of the portrayal of stream of consciousness in Gujarati novel, rendering the plot and incidents almost non-existent. The novel brings into bold relief the self-respect and dignity of Vibha, the heroine, who once having realized that her place in Dhimu's

order of priorities was different from Dhimu's place in that of her own, refuses to accept his proposal for marriage, though she loved Dhimu with all her heart.

Dalal's writings are marked by intellectualism, bold experiments, brilliant wit and satire and smart dialogue. Dalal, sometimes, is so brief that some of his sarcasm is missed by the reader.

Jayant Khatri (1909-1968)

Jayant Hirjibhai Khatri was born in Mundra, Cutch. He has written *Foran*, *Vahetan Jharanan* and *Khara Bapor*, collections of short stories. Khatri is distinguished for his broad human sympathy and progressive outlook. His descriptions of nature in its weird majesty, and the plot and the style of some of his best short stories are very interesting. His characters are largely drawn from illiterate rustic folk and men and women belonging to the lower strata of society. Khatri is superb in the delineation of elemental passions and conflicts raging within the human heart. He deftly handles the incidents of his stories and takes them to their climax. His *Lohi-nun Tipun* (a Drop of Blood), where a father released from jail after five and a half years, gets the shock of his life time when he sees in his young son, a chip of the old block, no, rather worse, as far as moral turpitude is concerned, is typical of Khatri's art.

Umashankar Joshi (1911)

Umashankar Jethalal Joshi who wrote for some time his short stories under the pseudonym "Vasuki", was born in Bamna, near Idar.

Starting his career as a modest school teacher, Umashankar rose to occupy some of the highest positions in the literary and educational worlds of India. He has received every Award and Honour open to a Gujarati writer, and also the Bharatiya Jnana Pith Award for the year 1968, perhaps the highest distinction for a creative writer in India.

Umashankar has written Poetry: *Vishvashanti*, *Gangotri*, *Nishitha*, *Prachina*, *Atithya*, *Vasant Varsha*, *Maha Prasthan*, *Abhijna*; One-act plays: *Sap-na Bhara*; *Shahid*; Short stories: *Shravani Melo*, *Visamo*; a novel: *Parakan Janyan*; Essays: *Goshthi*, *Ughadi Bari*; Research: *Purano-man Gujarat*, *Akha-na Chhappa*; Criticism: *Akho-Ek Adhyayan*, *Sama Samivedan*, *Abhiruchi*, *Shaili ane Svarup*, *Niriksha*, *Kavi-ni Sadhana*, *Shri ane Saurabh*; *Prati-Shabda*.

Umashankar has translated from Sanskrit, *Uttara Rama Charita* by Bhavabhooti and *Abhijnana Shakuntala* by Kalidasa; and from English, *Gule Poland*, (Crimean Sonnets), a series of

sonnets by the Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz. He has also edited *Mharan Sonnet* by Balvantrai Thakore, *Klanta Kavi* by Balashankar and *Svapna Prayan* by Harishchandra Bhatt; and in collaboration with Ramnarayan Pathak, *Kavya Tattva Vichar*, *Digdarshan*, *Sahitya Vichar* and two parts of *Vichar Madhuri* by Anandshankar Dhruva. He has been editing and publishing *Sanskriti*, a monthly periodical, since 1947. Its publication was voluntarily suspended for a few months during the period of emergency declared by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1975-76. It ranks with periodicals like *Vasant* and *Kaumudi*.

Vishvashanti (1931) is, as noted earlier, the first book embodying the new trend of poetry, known as the poetry of the Gandhian Era in Gujarati. It differs in its tone and diction from the poetry of the preceding era. It sings, as the title suggests, of Universal Peace, which, as the poet believes, is but a shadow and a dream as long as truth, love or beauty is violated in any corner of the universe, in which the *flora* and the *fauna* have as much a right to live in peace and freedom as the man; and requests Gandhiji, the prophet of non-violence, truth and love, who belongs neither to the East nor to the West but to all mankind and nature, to build the bridge of love between the East and the West.

Gangotri (1934) is the first collection of Umashankar's lyrics, sonnets and long descriptive, narrative and reflective poems. In *Gangotri*, the poet views India's struggle for freedom from foreign yoke in the context of universal peace and brotherhood and feels it his duty to sacrifice his all for the cause of humanity. But the decision is hard to make. A heart divided between duty towards the near and the dear ones and duty towards the beckoning call of humanity writhing for ages in agony is ably portrayed in the poems, *O! Yuga-tarasya Jaga Kantha!* (O! You ever-thirsty throat of mankind!) and *Balatan Pani* (the burning waters). The first vague stirrings of love, the instinctively felt need for a companion, are equally ably portrayed in *Bhomiya Vina* (without a guide).

Gangotri is a collection of poems, idealistic as well as realistic. Some of them are inspired by refined emotion; some, by keen intellect. Though highly serious and earnest, the poet is not lacking in a sense of humour, as poems like *Samarkand-Bukhara*, *Navo Nataka-kar*, *Harif* and *Mochi* evince.

Nishitha (1939) is also rich in variety of forms and modes of expression. It is quite remarkable that as early as 1935, that is barely a year after the publication of *Gangotri*, the poet has fully matured intellectually and realized the incorrigibility of human nature. His enthusiasm for some platitudinous sentiments

of the Gandhian Era has subsided, though Gandhiji has ever remained an object of his utmost esteem and reverence. It must be noted that the inspiration of Umashankar's poetry in *Nishitha* since 1935, is not rooted in any contemporary national or international political or socio-economic conditions. It has turned towards life; and in life too, it seeks to touch its very depths.

Nishitha is also remarkable for its exquisite love poems, other lyrics and an excellent long reflective poem, *Virata Pranaya*, where the poet's love for mankind stays unabated in spite of the instinct that periodically drives man to self-destruction. *Nishitha*, the title poem of the book, is great and magnificent, except only for its end where the poet invokes Nishitha, the god of midnight, to serve a socio-political mission. The series of sonnets *Atma-nan Khandar* (the Ruins of the Soul), portraying the gradual disenchantment of a young and ambitious visionary and the lesson of life he learns the hard way, has few parallels in Gujarati poetry.

Atithya (1946), apart from its poems of love, nature and reflections, is noteworthy for the poet's tributes to some esteemed fellow poets and for poems of happy family life.

Vasant Varsha (1954) is a collection of poems written during the post-independence years. The poet tries as best as he can, to keep the flame of his optimism and faith in mankind alive: but the pettiness, cowardice, meanness and hypocrisy seen all around, and the socio-political conditions obtaining in post-independence India tend to shatter, albeit temporarily, his self-confidence; and pathetically he prays to God—

Give me a spark of hope, my God!
My heart is on the rake:
Just give me a little self-confidence, please,
If you can't give me anything else³⁷.

With the change that has come over the poet's mood, the style of the poems, too, is changed. *Vasant Varsha* is also notable for some lovely songs of seasons and the *Gayan Varsho* (the years that are gone) and *Rahyan Varsho Teman* (In the years that remain) two lovely sonnets.

Abhijna (1967) The contents, form, and style of many of *Abhijna's* poems show how Umashankar is constantly interested in experimentation and keeping pace with the times. The collection also contains some beautiful tributes to several literary men of Gujarat, India and Europe.

37. प्रभो, कजळतां उरे तणख एक आशानी दे !
भले न कंइ दै शकें, जरीक आत्मश्रद्धा तुं दे !

Prachina (1944) and *Maha Prasthan* (1965) are creations of an objective poet and workmanship of an artist. Both are collections of seven poems each. Both are based on episodes from *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana*, *Bhagavata* and the life of the Buddha. And yet the poetry of both is new. The attitude towards life, as it emerges from the poems of both these collections is Umashankar's own.

There are points on which *Prachina* and *Maha Prasthan* also differ from each other. Some of *Prachina*'s poems are written in more than one metre, of course, with a specific artistic purpose to serve. The poems of *Maha Prasthan* are mostly written in a single metre each. The language of *Prachina* is highly Sanskritized; the language of *Maha Prasthan* is comparatively simple and idiomatic. *Rati Madan*, *Bal Rahul* and *Ashanka* of *Prachina* have largely an intellectual appeal. No poem of *Maha Prasthan* is contrived exclusively by intellect. Umashankar's interpretations of the episodes of poems like *Bal Rahul*, *Rati Madan* and *Kubja* in *Prachina* though ingenious, are controversial.

Umashankar's range of sentiments and modes of expression is very extensive. He has written poems inspired by emotions inspired by intellect, and inspired by reflective. The number of forms and metres Umashankar has successfully handled has few parallels in Gujarati literature. And a good poet and true, that he is, he has visualized harmony running like a thread under apparent disharmonies, and turned instants of exhilaration at the glimpse of momentary beauty into eternity.

Umashankar is a poet of Beauty which manifests itself not only in the tender and the lovely, but also in the sublime, majestic or awesome. He is also a poet of love, the object of which is not an individual, nor a group nor a community, not even mankind, but the entire universe with its birds and beasts and trees and flowers.

Umashankar is a votary of life—the life on this earth. The earth, too, like heaven, has its own nectar; and that nectar too has potency to defy death and recall the dead to life. Umashankar, in the course of the years given him, has found this nectar—the Beauty that pulsates in every atom of the Universe; and is happy to note that he would not return with two empty hands to his Master.

The names of Umashankar and Sundaram are invariably linked in any account of Gujarati poetry. Like Sundaram, Umashankar's range of sympathy is very extensive. Like Sundaram, he, too, moves with equal ease in the fields of emotion, sentiment, reflection and thought. Like Sundaram, he too

transfigures every sentiment of human heart into artistic form. Sundaram excels in originality of outlook, Umashankar, in diction and technique. In weak moments Sundaram's poetry becomes prosaic; Umashankar's a word play.

Sap-na Bhara (1936) is a collection of 11 one-act realistic plays, based largely on tragedy that is the life of woman, particularly so in rural India. Many of the plays are written in the real speech of the people. Many of these are perfect specimens of the *genre*.

In *Shahid* (1951) also, a collection of 11 one-act plays, it is the disenchanting conditions of the country and the tragedy not only of the life of woman but of the life of humans, that loom large over Umashankar's mind. Umashankar the incorrigible optimist of poetry, has, in these one-act plays, lost all hope for mankind, not only for the present-day people of India (as in *Manek Chowk*), but also for the whole mankind, for all time to come (as in *Shahid*).

Umashankar's short stories are marked by a variety of characters, situations, sentiments and modes of expression. They are suggestive of the many—and often mutually contradictory—psychological factors operating consciously and unconsciously under man's word or deed. *Pagli-no Padnar*, *Hilli*, *Chhellun Chhanun*, *Mari Champa-no Var*, *Shravani Melo* are some of the best short stories in literature.

The place of Umashankar as a scholar and critic is exceptional. Sensitive and intimate contact with the ancient and the modern masterpieces of world literature, keen intellect, penetrating insight, refined taste, extensive sympathy, sound scholarship and a solid base of literary theory invest the critical writings of Umashankar, a practising artist, with width and depth of a rare quality. Not that Umashankar cannot be frank or even bitter, if occasion demanded it, but he prefers to be suave and soft-spoken as far as he can.

On the one side, his opinions about recognised works and authors largely conform with those that are handed down traditionally; and, on the other, his conception of literature goes on accepting and assimilating fresh and new points of view, as they present themselves from time to time. The range of Umashankar's interests is exceedingly extensive and it treasures many and varied things of permanent and contemporary value. It is difficult to come across any other Gujarati scholar and critic, old or new, whose range of interest is so wide and whose actual achievement matches with the range.

Krishnalal Shridharani (1911-1960)

Krishnalal Jethalal Shridharani was born in Bhavnagar.

Shridharani made his debut as a poet of great promise. He has written poems and plays. His poems are collected in two volumes: *Kodiyan* and *Punarapi*. His plays, among others, are *Mor-nan Indan*, *Vadalo*, *Sona Pari*, *Piyo Gori*, *Padmini*.

Of these *Padmini* is a three-act play based on an historical plot. *Mor-nan Indan* is a three-act play with a thin plot and some very beautiful lyrics. *Vadalo* and *Sona Pari*, a collection of four plays, have children as their characters. *Piyo Gori* is a collection of ten one-act plays.

The poems of Shridharani's *Kodiyan* (1934) distinguished themselves from those of his contemporaries by their themes, manner and diction. Shridharani's similes were new and fresh, his presentation, dramatic; his spirit, proud and undaunted. Because of the frequent use of colloquial words and phrases, his language exuded the aroma of the earth. Besides the urge for freedom, concern for the poor and the exploited, intolerance of sham and superstition—sentiments common to the poets of the Gandhian Era—, Shridharani, a romantic poet that he was, sang, under the influence of the mysticism and lyricism of Tagore's poetry, of the Beautiful, the Grand, and the Far off.

Shridharani lacks the discipline of an artist. He often mutilates Sanskrit words or uses them in the wrong context. This indifference to the use of words—the only tools of a poet—often renders his poetry obscure, and consequently, hard fully to enjoy.

After his return from America, where he stayed for 12 years and wrote seven books in English, Shridharani wrote some poems which are collected in *Punarapi* (Once again). Their style is changed. Lyricism is replaced by sarcasm; and freshness and exuberance, by cynicism. All Shridharani's poems have been brought out in the revised and enlarged edition of *Kodiyan* in 1957.

Anantrai Raval (1912)

Anantrai Manishankar Raval was born in Amreli. He has passed his active life—except for a few years when he worked as a Director of the Directorate of Languages of the Gujarat Government—as a College Professor of Gujarati Language and Literature.

Raval is, one of those critics who have reviewed the greatest number of books of contemporary literature and reviewed them well and with a full measure of sympathy. His articles of criticism, including the several annual reviews of books he did for the Gujarat Sahitya Sabha, are collected in nine volumes, among which are *Sahitya Vihar*, *Gandhakshata*, *Sahitya Vivek*, *Sahitya Nikasha*, *Taratamya*.

Assimilation is the keynote of Raval's talent.

Even in the articles written at the early stage of his career, which naturally lack maturity of thought and style so characteristic of Raval's later writings, there is a certain element of sobriety and understanding which raise those articles much above the level of mere college notes. The ring of honesty and impartiality is distinctly heard in all these articles which offer a clear, ordered exposition of the subject and a neat, lucid digest of anything important that may have been said in regard to it.

Raval is absolutely free from pedantry. He can discriminate between things which are important and things which are merely accessory. He, therefore, never runs into irrelevant digressions, unreal emphasis on trivial beauties or blemishes, hasty conclusions, sweeping statements and wild exaggerations. He does not presume to be original or brilliant. Truth, of course, he says, and says in a way which would not hurt. Beauty he can perceive; and perceives it in its proper perspective. He is accurate, thorough and balanced.

Raval has edited several books including *Nanatal Madhu-kosha*, *Kalapi-no Kavyakalap*, *Botadhar-ni Kavyasarita*, Premanand's *Nalakhyana* and Samal's *Madan Mohana*. These books also evince the editor's comprehensive study and conscientious industry.

Pannalal Patel (1913)

Pannalal Nanatal Patel was born in Meghraj, a small village on the border of Rajasthan and Gujarat.

Pannalal has written novels: *Valamnan*, *Malela Jiv*, *Manavi-ni Bhavai*, *Bhiru Sathi*, *Bhangya-na Bheru*, *Na Chhutke*, *Yauvan*, *Surabhi*, *Pachhle Barne* etc., short stories: *Sukh-Dukhanan Sathi*, *Panetar-na Rang*, *Vatrak-ne Kanthe*, *Lakh-Chorasi* etc. and plays: *Jamairaj*, *Vaitarni-ne Kanthe*, *Dholiya Sagsisam-na*.

Pannalal has handled both the novel and the short story with the dexterity of a born artist. Delineation of village life is his *forte*. He has depicted in his novels and short stories the meanness, pettiness, cowardice, unimaginable poverty, ignorance and superstition, as well as the love, devotion, self-respect, humanity, nobility and magnanimity of the rural folk.

Pannalal's *Malela Jiv* and *Manavi-ni Bhavai* are master pieces of Gujarati literature, *Malela Jiv*, which has been recommended for translation into all Indian languages, under a Sahitya Akademi Programme and has, in fact, already been translated into some languages, is a story of love between Kanji and Jivi, who come of different castes. They cannot marry

because it is the male Kanji, who turns out to be weak-hearted in the beginning. The woman Jivi, a poor and helpless orphan, is made of sterner stuff. But Kanji's hesitation in taking the right step at the right moment ruins the lives of all concerned; and when he musters strength enough to rectify his mistake, well, it is a moment too late. The novel is remarkable for its unique style and manner, very well-knit plot, life-like characters, depiction of conflicts raging deep within the human heart, picturesque descriptions and the village with its characters at various levels of moral evolution.

Manavi-ni Bhavai is also a story of love between Kalu and Raju. But it is the hard and tragic life of farmers in Indian villages that is in the forefront. The plot of the novel is not as closely knit as that of *Malela Jiv*; and the end is melodramatic. But the struggle for existence in an inhospitable land, immensely aggravated by the *Chhappaniyo Kal* (the proverbial famine that raged over the land in 1900-1901 A.D., when survival at any cost was the only rule governing the conduct of many a man), when whole villages vacated and migrated to cities in the hope of finding some little sustenance for life until the setting in of monsoon, the overpowering pangs of hunger and worst of all, the utter humiliation of subsisting on charity: all these are beautifully brought out. Rarely has the village of Gujarat been so artistically brought to life as in this novel.

Pannalal also excels in short stories based particularly on village life, where, sometimes under the pretext of humour he points out the ignorance and stark poverty of the villager.

Pannalal's *National Savings*, *Vatrak-ne Kanthe*, *Lakh Chorasi*, *Bapu-no Kutro*, *Rang Vato* are some of the best short stories in Gujarati.

Ishvar Petlikar (1916) and Pitambar Patel (1918-1977) have also written novels and short stories based largely on village life. Pannalal depicts the life and atmosphere of the region on the border of Rajasthan and Gujarat; Petlikar depicts the region of Mahikantha and Charotar, while Pitambar depicts the life of Mehsana District. All the three know their respective parts of rural Gujarat through and through; and all the three are good story-tellers too. But Pannalal is superb in style and artistic vision.

Darshak (1914)

Manubhai Rajaram Pancholi who writes under the pseudonym of Darshak is a Gandhian thinker, a student of history and an educationist. He had little formal education.

Darshak has written novels: *Bandhan ane Mukti*, *Dipannirvan*, *Bandighar*, *Prem ane Puja*, *Jher to Pidhan Chhe Jani*

Jani in two parts, *Socrates*; serious essays: *Apano Varso ane Vaibhav*, *Triveni Tirtha*; plays: 1857, *Jallianwalla*, *Paritrana*.

Darshak's *Jallianwalla*, a drama, was published in 1935 and his novels *Bandighar*, *Bandhan ane Mukti*, and *Kalyanyatra* were published in 1939. *Dipanirvan* was published in 1944; and it ran into second edition in 1946. Yet it was only after it was published with Umashankar Joshi's introduction in 1953, that its greatness and subtle points of beauty came to the notice of literary Gujarat and Darshak was established as an accomplished author.

Darshak is the first novelist after Govardhanram to write novels with high seriousness of purpose. He is the only novelist of note who has fortified his genius by intensive study. Darshak has something worthwhile to say and he knows how to say it.

Darshak's historical novels, *Dipanirvan*, *Jher to Pidhan Chhe Jani Jani* and *Socrates* in particular, transport the reader to that period of history that Darshak seeks to portray in his novel. Darshak instead of projecting the socio-political problems of his days into that period of history, portrays the interplay of human emotions on the canvass of historical truth. He selects a period of history that has a natural relevance to the present situation.

It must however, be noted that doubts about the accuracy of some of Darshak's interpretations of history have convincingly been raised lately by some scholars.

Decency, dignity, elegance and noble idealism form the keynote of Darshak's novels. Their plots are well-knit; the characters are well-drawn, and the message is suggested only through the behaviour of characters and the final disposition of the plot. Darshak never plays to the gallery and there is nothing mean or vulgar about his novels.

Darshak's novels, however, seem somewhat to lack that power which captivates the mind and imagination of the reader and leaves him a changed man.

Shivkumar Joshi (1916)

Shivkumar Girajashankar Joshi was born in Ahmedabad.

Shivkumar is a prolific writer. He has written novels: *Kanchuki Bandh*, *Anangrag*, *Shravani*, *Abh rue eni Navlakh Dhare*, *Chirag* etc.; short stories: *Rajanigandha*, *Trishul*, *Kanak Katoro*, *Komal Gandhar*, *Navapad*, etc.; dramas: *Sumangala*; *Andharan Ulecho*, *Durvankur*, *Suvarnarekha*, *Krittivas*, *Kahat Kabira*, *Triparna*; one-act plays: *Pankh Vinanan Parevan*; *Anant Sadhana*; *Nilanchal*; *Ganga Vahe Chhe Apani* etc.; account of travels: *Joviti Kotaro Joviti Kandara*; *Joi men Kotaro*, *Joi men Kandara*.

Shivkumar has also translated *Jogajog* by Tagore and *Adarsha Hindu Hotel* by Vibhutibhushan and adapted *Viraj Vahu* and *Devdas* of Sharat Chandra Chatterji.

Shivkumar's novels and short stories cover a wide range of characters and places. There is an atmosphere of idealism about them. Shivkumar's power of description and narration is noteworthy. But his description of tours which his characters take in some of his novels fail to form an integral part of the plot; and his short stories often sink into sentimentalism. They sometimes also suffer from inherent inconsistencies.

Shivkumar's major contribution is in the field of drama. Being himself an actor and director of plays, Shivkumar is adept at stage-craft. Some of his dramas, therefore have been successful on the stage.

Shivkumar's account of travels to Europe and America is highly informative and interesting. It reveals the workmanship of a novelist.

Bhogilal Sandesara (1917)

Bhogilal Jayachandbhai Sandesara was born in Patan. He is a student of Sanskrit, Prakrit, Apabhramsha and old and mediaeval Gujarati. His books include works of research like *Vaghelao-nun Gujarat*, *Vastupal-nun Vidyamandal*, *Prachin Gujarati Sahitya-man Vritta Rachana* etc., works edited by him, like, *Sattarma Shatak-nan Prachin Gurjar Kavya*, *Simhasana-batrasi* of Sangha Vijaya, *Ushaharan* of Virsimha, etc. and translations like, *Vasudeva Hindi* of Sanghadas Gani, *Panchatantra* etc. Sandesara also directed the research and publication of many more books, when he was the Director of the Oriental Institute of Vadodara. He has also written *Pradakshina*, an account of his study tour of the East and the West.

Sandesara maintains a very high standard of research and editing.

Chunilal Madia (1922-1968)

Chunilal Kalidas Madia was born in Dhoraji. He worked as a journalist for many years. Towards the closing years of his life, he ran a monthly periodical, *Ruchi*, of his own.

Madia is a prolific writer. He has written novels: *Vyaj-no Varas*, *Pavak Jwala*, *Indhan Ochhan Padyan*, *Vela Vala-ni Chhanyadi*, *Liludi Dharti* among others; short stories: *Ghughavtan Pur*, *Padmini*, *Roopa-Aroop*, *Antahsrota*, *Kaljan Koranan*, among others; one-act plays: *Rangada*, *Rakta Tilak*, *Visha Vimochan*; full-length plays: *Hun ne Mari Vahu*, *Ramlo Robinhood*, *Shoonyashesha* poetry: *Sonnet*. Madia has also written essays,

criticism, biography, and account of travels. He has done translations and editing of books.

Madia's first book *Ghughavtan Pur*, a collection of short stories was published in 1945. Since then he uninterruptedly wrote till his death and ran columns in newspapers.

Madia's novels, short stories and plays are marked by a large variety of time, places and characters. His command over language is remarkable and he handles it effectively to underscore the cultural level of his characters, who range from uncouth and illiterate rustics to royalty and divinity. His descriptions are powerful. But he is often a little too verbose and repetitive. His characters are sometimes overdrawn; and his stories and plays are often weak at the core. He lacks the self-control of an artist.

Purushottam Vishram Mavji (1879-1929)

Among the other writers of the period, mention must be made of Purushottam Vishram Mavji (1879-1929), a student of history, politics, literature, art, antiquities, sculpture and architecture. He edited and published *Suvarnamala*, a lavishly produced monthly periodical devoted to fine art. Purushottam has written some novels, including, *Sur Sagar-ni Sundari* and *Shivaji-no Vagh Nakh*. He has also written in Marathi, *Vatan patren: Nivad patren*.

Chimanlal Dahyabhai Dalal (1881-1918)

Chimanlal Dahyabhai Dalal was the first scholar to examine exhaustively the repositories of Patan and Jasalmir, though some work was done in this field earlier by Manilal Dvivedi. Dalal brought to light many old and valuable books like *Kuvalaya Mala*, by Udyotana Suri. He has also edited for the Gaekwad's Oriental Series^{37A} *Kavya Mimamsa* by Rajshekhar, *Nara-Narayanananda Kavya* by Vastupala and *Partha Parakrama*.

Dalal, a student of grammar and philology, also made a historical and comparative study on a scientific basis of several old stories like the stories of Chandrahas, Sadevant-Savalinga and Madhav-Kama Kundala.

Pandit Sukhlalji (1880-1978)

Panditji has edited and translated a number of ancient books, particularly of Jain literature. Panditji is an original thinker and philosopher whose comparative study and synthesis of all branches of Indian Philosophy is unparalleled. Panditji belongs to that category of Indian Philosophers whose only endeavour is to find out Truth, irrespective of any other considerations.

37A. The G.O.S. was instituted by Sir Sayajirao Gaekwad, after he went through the report submitted by Dalal.

Girjashankar Vallabhji Acharya (1881-1964)

Girjashankar Vallabhji Acharya the Curator of the Archeological Section of the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, was a student of numismatics and paleography. His *Gujarat-na Aitihasik Lekho* (the Historical Inscriptions of Gujarat) in three parts is noteworthy.

Durgashankar Kevalram Shastri (1882-1952)

Shastri edited for many years *Ayurveda-Vijnana*, a monthly periodical devoted to "Ayurveda", the science of indigenous medicines in India. He was, besides, a profound scholar of ancient and mediaeval Indian history and culture and Sanskrit literature. He was exact, thorough and objective in whatever he wrote.

Jagannath Damodar Tripathi (1883-1936)

Jagannath Damodar Tripathi known only as Sagar is noted for his *Gujarati Gazalistan* (1913), an anthology of Gujarati gazals; and for two parts of *Divan-e-Sagar* (1916 and 1936), collections of his own gazals in the Sufi style and other poems.

Gijubhai Badheka (1885-1945)

Gijubhai is a distinguished writer of children's literature and a pioneer of Montessory System of education for children in Gujarat.

Nrisimha Bhagwandas Vibhakar (1888-1925)

Vibhakar had the ambition to raise the cultural level of the Gujarati stage. He wrote six plays—*Siddhartha Buddha*, *Sneha Sarita*, *Sudha Chandra*, *Madhu Bansari*, *Megha Malini* and *Abionan Bandhan* which were all produced on the professional stage. These plays embody the spirit of social and political rejuvenation of the day. Vibhakar also published a quarterly periodical *Rangabhoomi* (The Stage) which could not last longer than a year.

Ramlal Chunilal Modi (1890-1949)

Modi was a student of old and mediaeval literature and historical research. His researches on Bhalan are noteworthy.

Shayada (1892-1962)

Harji Lavji Damani is noted for his gazals and for stabilizing the gazal in Gujarat. Other gazal writers of note are Barkat Virani (Befam), Mariz, Saif, Shoonya, Ghayal, Nasim and Gani.

Ratnamanirao Bhimrao Jote (1895-1955)

Ratnamanirao was a student of Sanskrit and Ancient Indian History. He is the author of *Gujarat-no Sanskritik Itihas* and of authentic histories of Ahmedabad, Khambhat and Somnath.

Bapalal Garbaddas Shah (Vaidya) (1896)

Bapalal is a profound scholar of Ayurveda, Botany and Sanskrit literature, particularly of Kalidasa. His numerous articles collected in his books reveal his knowledge of Ayurveda, Allopathy and other schools of medicine, a strictly scientific approach, and consciousness of the sanctity of his profession.

Manjulal Ranchhodlal Majumdar (1897)

Manjulal Ranchhodlal Majumdar is noted for his historical and comparative research and editing of some books of mediaeval literature, including *Sudama Charitra*, *Abhimanyu Akhyana*, *Rana Yajna* and *Panchadand* of Premanand.

Rasiklal Chhotalal Parikh (1897)

Parikh is a poet who wrote under the pseudonym of "Moosikar", a translator of Mammatt's *Kavya Prakasha*, Ullas 1-6 in collaboration with Ramnarayan Pathak, and an author of *Sharvilaka*, a drama based obliquely on Shoodraka's *Mrichchhakatika*. Rasiklal is a renowned scholar of History, Poetics and Dramatics.

Poojalal Ranchhodlal Dalvadi (1901)

Poojalal is a poet of the realm of the spiritual and of chaste and perspicuous diction. He is, perhaps, the poet who has written the greatest number of sonnets. His translation of Shri Aurobindo's *Savitri* is an achievement.

Harishchandra Bhagavatishankar Bhatt (1906-1950)

Harishchandra was a poet of fine sensitivity. All his poems edited by Umashankar Joshi are collected in *Svapnaprayan*, a posthumous publication. Harishchandra, an ardent lover of western literature, imbibed the spirit of international consciousness in poetry and introduced Rilke and Mallarmé to Gujarat in the early thirties.

Patil—Maganlal Bhudharbhai Patel (1906-1970)

Patil is one of the very few poets of the Gandhian Era, who remained untouched by the spirit of the age. He is also known for his intense subjectivity, romanticism, and experimentation in diction, style and metres. Some of his gazals are excellent.

Ramprasad Mohanlal Shukla (1908)

Ramprasad Mohanlal Shukla an able sonneteer, is known for his series of sonnets *Vinash ane Vikas*.

Yashodhar Mehta (1909)

Yashodhar has written *Ranchhodlal ane Bijan Natako*, a collection of five biographical plays. He has also written *Sari Jati Reti*, a well-written but highly controversial novel, because of its

uninhibited depiction of erotic sentiments. He has also written other novels.

Durgesh Shukla (1911)

Durgesh wrote as early as 1934, *Urvashi*, a long dramatic poem running into about 500 lines of a single metre "Prithvi". Durgesh has also written *Prithvi-nan Ansu*, a collection of realistic and symbolic plays. He has translated Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* and adapted some social comedies from English. He has also written short stories, which are collected in *Pujanani Phool*.

Svapnastha (1913—1970)

Bhanubhai Ranchhodlal Vyas, was a talented poet of communist ideology. He wrote *Ajampa-ni Madhuri*; *Vinasha-na Ansho ane Maya*, *Achala* etc.

Prajaram Raval (1911)

Prajaram is a poet yearning for the touch of the Divine. He has written some excellent poetry of the seasons in chaste and dignified diction.

Tansukh Bhatt (1911)

Tansukh Bhatt is the author of *Dandiyatra*, a long poem commemorating Gandhiji's historic march to Dandi in 1930, and of the epic *Mahatmayana* (1974) extolling the life and work of Mahatma Gandhi.

Another volume of poems on the major incidents of the life of Gandhiji, *Gandhi Gaurava* (1970) has been published by Shri Yogeshvar, who has also written poems and novels. A third one, *Mohan Gandhi*, four cantos of an epic expected to run into eighty cantos by Dahyabhai Patel has also been published in 1971.

Harivallabh Bhayani (1917)

Bhayani is a noted research scholar of Prakrit, Apabhramsha, and old Gujarati literature and a distinguished student of linguistics, grammar and Western Aesthetics.

Pushkar Chandarvakar (1921)

Pushkar Chandarvakar is a novelist, short story writer, one-act play-wright and above all, a research scholar of folk-literature. Pushkar has given two collections of folk-songs of tribal people like Bhils, Padhars, Dharala, Kali Paraj and others: *Navo Halko* and *Chandar Ugye Chalvun*.

Prabodh Pandit (1923-1975)

Prabodh Pandit was an eminent linguist of international stature. His *Gujarati Bhasha-nun Dhvanisvaroop ane Dhvani-Parivartan* is

one of the very few original and authoritative studies of Gujarati Language on strictly scientific basis. Most of Pandit's work, however, is done through English.

(II)

POST-GANDHIAN PERIOD (1945-1955)

With the departure of the British in 1947, India became independent and within five months, in January 1948, Gandhiji was assassinated. With the achievement of political independence and its subsequent frustration and all elaboration of Gandhian ideology by lesser men sounding hollow, the Gujarati writer did not feel sufficiently inspired by what was going on in the direction of socio-economic regeneration of the country.

He therefore turned to nature and love and occasionally to God and interested himself in man, not as a social or political being, but as a man, a human being.

All this, of course, was neither a divergence from the immediate past nor an improvement on it. The writer of the Gandhian Era, too, had known and sung of man as man, besides seeing him in his social and political perspective. He had also sung of nature, love and God, and that too very often with an originality of outlook. He was, moreover, completely in tune with his times and touched at every point life as he saw it. His experiments in form and metres were also bold and novel. In thought as well as technique and style, he rose to be a voice and not an echo. His personality was distinct from that of his predecessors.

This is, of course, only with reference to the best among the writers of the Gandhian Era, which like any other era anywhere, had its fair share of mediocres, imitators and parasites. But an era should be assessed by the worth of the best it has produced; and it can be said with a fair degree of certainty that the Gandhian Era in Gujarati literature is richer in creative talent than any of its preceding ones.

Despite the fact that the socio-cultural climate of the country and the State had suffered a sea-change, the new writer of the post-Gandhian period could not, during the first decade, distinguish himself from the writer of the Gandhian Era to the extent to which the writer of the Gandhian Era had done from his own predecessors. The period, therefore, may, at best, be called a period of continuation of the Gandhian Era with some significant modifications.

The poetry of the first decade of the post-Gandhian period tends to be short, sweet and lyrical. Longer narrative, descrip-

tive and reflective poems and sonnets gradually cease to find favour with the new writer of the period, who, once again like his predecessor of the pre-Gandhian period turns to songs and lyrics for self-expression.

Even so, particularly during the latter part of the decade, one cannot but notice the new writer's struggle, although in an embryonic stage, to break away from the past and to assert himself. He seems to be getting strongly influenced by what goes on by the name of the modern in Western literature, either in the field of creative writing or in that of literary criticism.

He, therefore, loves to treat sex without inhibition and probes into the unconscious without faltering. He treats the mundane and the common in an uncommon way and he romanticizes the real. On the formal side also he derives his inspiration from the modern West and strives to reach perfection in form in prose and verse.

Prahlad Parekh (1912-1962)

Prahlad Jethalal Parekh and Krishnalal Shridharani, both were influenced by Tagore's mysticism and lyricism of Bengali poetry. But Shridharani came under the spell of Gandhiji as well; while Prahlad, like Patil, remained untouched by the spirit of the Gandhian Era, except in a stray poem like "*Bijun Eke Khamis Na*" (There is no other shirt to put on). But while Patil turned to intense subjectivity and experimentation Prahlad steered clear of it and became, as Umashankar Joshi puts it, one of those who were "particularly more inclined towards beauty¹."

The adjective "more" is important here. The leading poets of the Gandhian Era, too, had as all poets worth their salt have, their tryst with Beauty. But in the first half of the thirties they were partly pre-occupied with the idea of freedom—freedom not only from the political bondage but also freedom from the age-old socio-economic prejudices which led to man's exploitation of man; and in the second half of the thirties, as the publication in 1939 of Sundaram's *Vasudha* and Umashankar's *Nishitha* bear out, they ceased to draw inspiration from their contemporary political and socio-economic ideas and turned to longer narrative and reflective poems permeated with their faith in the eternal values of life like truth, beauty, manliness, universal brotherhood and peace.

Prahlad, being essentially a poet of lyrical talent remained in his poetry largely unaffected by this trend and wrote almost exclusively lyrical poetry.

1. *Bari Bahar*, 1960 edition, Preface, Pp. 11.

A sensuous poet that Prahlad is, his poetry abounds in colours, sounds, and fragrance. By a clever use of metaphors he embodies the abstract and puts it within the purview of the senses. He feels darkness to be aromatic, stars full of fragrance, wind blowing the conch of a monsoon cloud and the music of the sea alluring enough to release man's mind from its mundane attachments and restore it to its natural serenity.

There is an under-current of sadness in the poet's poetry. In spite of millions of stars sparkling in the sky, he, for some inexplicable reason, feels lonely. He hankers after someone who could share his intimate joys and sorrows, hopes and disappointments, someone who could *understand* him. Nature however lively and lovely it may be, is indifferent to human emotions. He therefore turns to man with the hope that "He alone would perhaps understand me."

Some of Prahlad's lyrics can be ranked among the best in Gujarati.

Rajendra Shah (1913)

Rajendra Keshavlal Shah was born in Kapadvanj. Though, like Prahlad, he had actively participated in the National Movement of 1930-31 in his early youth, his poetry, too, like Prahlad's, is largely unaffected by the atmosphere of the Gandhian Era. It must be said, however, that the *Bhoodan* movement of Acharya Vinoba Bhave and the Chinese aggression on India in 1962 have evoked a response from the poet's heart. He has written *Bhavya Bhikhari* (The Majestic Beggar), a tribute to Vinobaji; and *Jag, Jag* (Awake, O awake!) in *Shanta Kolahal*, an expression of the poet's agitation at the Chinese aggression. *Bhuliye Judai Bhai* (Let us forget our differences Brother!) and *He Abhinava Patha Yatrik!* (O! you pilgrim of the new path!), also in the *Shanta Kolahal*, are poems on national integration.

Rajendra, however, is on the whole a poet of love, nature and mystical experiences.

The poet says he has come to this earth with no other end in view but to wander at will, identifying himself completely with the world. This selfless excursion in the realm of beauty of the world—its flowers, and birds and everything has, of course, its own rewards, though the poet does not seek them: One supreme and infinite delight, which releases him from all shackles and inhibitions; and this, in turn, leads him to complete identification of himself with every animate and inanimate object of the universe and of every animate and inanimate

2. कदी वळी समजशे ए ज मारी वातमां.

object of the universe with himself, culminating in the realization of the fundamental unity of the universe.

It is the poet's conviction that "everywhere in the universe, there is an invisible thread of unity running into everything".

His *Ayushyana Avasheshe* (At the fag end of life) a series of five excellent sonnets—in which a man retiring from active life and leaving the well-established and prosperous world of his creation in some far off city, returns to his ancestral home in a tiny out-of-the-way village,—also ends on this note.

Rajendra is superb at description. With the right number of right words in the right place, he often creates before the mind's eye of the readers pictures of indescribable beauty. In *Vijana Aranye* (In the Solitary Forest), where he describes the grandeur of a primordial forest in which "in motion linear how slips the serpent's beauty"³ is one case in point.

Rajendra's narrative ability is best seen in *Shravani Madhyahne* (At a Shravana⁴ Noon). in which the lethargic atmosphere at noon in a village, the over-grown thickets in monsoon encroaching from both sides upon the narrow road leading to the temple through the fields, the wayside pool of mud where sits a lazy herd of buffaloes, "on whose backs play the frogs their leisurely game"⁵, the courtyard with a few Karen trees in a corner, the old temple with the peak of its white dome pointing at the sky and through an association of ideas, the pilgrim's experience of being transported to Kailasa⁷ when he sits by the side of the Nandi⁸ and the cool monsoon breeze plays with his eyelashes and hair,—all these are beautifully narrated.

Rajendra excels in songs, particularly the songs of young exuberant love. The freshness and buoyancy, romance and abandon of the first strivings of love in youthful heart, in tune with the changing moods of the seasons, are best portrayed in "*Vanavasinan Gito*"⁹ (Songs of the Foresters). Even though it is difficult to say if the unsophisticated tribals living close to

3. न्यारा छे पात्र नाये विनिमय लहुं शो आत्मनी चेतनानो !

विद्वे सवंत्र सोमां अदीठ वही रह्यो तंतु शो एकतानो !

Dhvani

4. रेखाळी गतिमां केवुं सरे सोन्दयं मयंतुं !

Dhvani

5. A holy month for Hindus in monsoon.

6. दादूर जेनी पीळये ग्यतां निरांते.

7. A peak of the Himalayas believed to be the abode of Lord Shiva

8. The bull which Lord Shiva is believed to ride.

9. *Shanta Kolahal*.

nature could so articulately express their emotions, these songs are extremely enjoyable as unlabelled love-poems.

Rajendra's language is interspersed with Bengali, Hindi, Rajasthani and Marathi words, and sometimes Sanskrit words with uncertain connotations. Rajendra sometimes mutilates beyond recognition Sanskrit words or uses them in a wrong sense. His diction sometimes lacks perspicuity and some of his poems are difficult to understand.

Ushanas (1920) and Jayant Pathak (1920)

Natvarlal Kuberji Pandya, known only as Ushanas, is perhaps the most prolific poet of the post-Gandhian period in Gujarati. He has written songs, lyrics, sonnets, series of sonnets, bhajans, dialogues in verse, haikus, muktakas and free verse. He has written poems of love, nature, death and the Divine. He has written descriptive, narrative and reflective poems. He has written in the style of traditional classicists and poets of the Gandhian Era as well as in the style of the modern symbolists and imagists. There is not a mood, form, style or current thought in Gujarati poetry, to which he has not responded immediately and with enthusiasm. And all this he has done with the sensitive heart and imagination of a genuine poet.

Ushanas's poems are collected in *Prasun* (1955), *Nepathye*, *Ardra*, *Manomudra*, *Trina-no Graha*, *Spanda ane Chanda*, *Kinkini* and *Ashvattha* (1975). Of these, *Nepathye* is a collection of poems aiming at bringing in the verse-drama in Gujarati, in the style of Umashankar's *Prachina*.

The others are collections of his miscellaneous poems, which serve also as a graph of the state of poetry from time to time in Gujarati.

Ushanas is essentially a poet of *Vismaya*, wonder. To him every object in the universe, ranging from a child's smile and the fragrance of some unknown flower on an unknown bush, to the colours of the seasons and grass and the star-studded diadem of the sky are equal objects of wonder, the wonder of a child exploring the mystery of the universe.

Ushanas also excels in the delineation of pathos, his *Valavi Ba Avi* (Having seen the children off, Mom returned home) and the series of sonnets on the death of his father and of his mother are excellent specimens of poetry that moves the heart. Ushanas's pathos is deep and intense. It is free from sentimentalism or exhibitionism.

Similes and metaphors come easily to Ushanas. His style is lucid and his diction smooth; but it is occasionally marred by a sudden intrusion of a rough and strange word or phrase.

It is the style and diction, more than the content that distinguish Ushanas from his contemporary poets. Enthusiastic and immediate response to everything that is in the air is both Ushanas's strength and weakness.

Usually associated with Ushanas is the name of Jayant Pathak, the author of *Marmar*, *Sanket*, *Vismaya*, *Sarga* and *Antariksha*, collections of poems; *Adhunik Kavita-Pravaha*, a dissertation on modern poetry and *Vananchal*, memoirs.

Pathak's earlier poems are marked by a sense of wonder; later ones, by a sense of sadness at the incongruity between the world of yesterday and the world that the poet finds today. Pathak's poetry is characterized by fine sensitivity, emotions controlled by intellect, and lucidity of style. Pathak's *Adhunik Kavita Pravaha* is a study in depth of the currents of Gujarati poetry, of the period 1920 to 1955. It is a sort of continuation of Sundaram's *Arvachin Kavita* and can serve as a companion volume of Ramnarayan Pathak's *Arvachin Kavya Sahitya-nan Vaheno*. *Vananchal* is a work of beautiful prose that brings back to life the time and the place of the author's childhood in a village on the border of a forest. Its descriptions are graphic and some of the characters memorable.

Niranjan Bhagat (1926)

Niranjan is another distinguished poet of the post-Gandhian period. His poems published earlier in four books *Chhandolaya*, *Kinnari*, *Alpa Viram*, and *33 Kavyo*, and some other poems have been collected in *Chhandolaya—Brihat* (1974).

Niranjan is essentially a poet of rhythm. He has written poems in traditional Sanskrit metres as well. But the rhythm of his songs and lyrics is all Niranjan's own. Niranjan has also written some excellent sonnets, taking care of their elaborate rhyme-schemes. His muktakas, too, are lovely.

Niranjan, like Rajendra, is a poet whose excursion into this world is a mission of love. "I have come here just for a stroll", he says, "not for business either yours or mine!"¹⁰. He is fascinated by the fresh life-giving breeze outdoor; but, unlike Rajendra, he is fascinated also by the new bright faces he meets with at every step. His one desire is to forge bonds of happy friendship with the world; and, if possible, yes, only if possible, —it is not the main purpose, not even a purpose of the excursion —to express the ecstasy of this happiness of love in a couple of songs.

10. हुं तो बस फरवा आव्यो छुं !

हुं क्यां एके काम तमारुं के मारुं करवा आव्यो छुं ?

Niranjan is a poet of exuberant love. His untutored unsophisticated lass with the heart of a gopi exclaims in an ecstasy of joy: "Harivara (Krishna) has kidnapped my heart!"¹¹

Though perplexed by the fact that she had not wooed him, she feels proud of the fact that of all the gopis, He selected her, as His beloved. The poet sings of the kiss which blends life and bliss in one; and feels prepared to hold in the same close embrace death if it came in the form of his beloved.

But the poet has tasted the bitterness of unrequited love as well and he sees it symbolized in the fruit of Bhartrihari¹². The poet is disillusioned about man as well. Man's hesitation born of suspicion in grasping a hand extended out of sheer good will and friendship, and his habitual mask of geniality, sincerity and hail-fellow-well-met spirit concealing his face expressing quite the reverse, frustrate the poet; and he feels quite lonely in the midst of such a crowd. Yet his love for this earth, for this life, with laughter this moment and tears, the next, is unabated.

Niranjan's special contribution, however, is *Pravaldiva* (the Coral Island), a group of poems depicting city civilization. Bombay, whose geographical shape is compared to the neck of a camel, seems to Niranjan an alligator minus its tale. It is the all-consuming hunger of its machines and the namelessness, facelessness, cheerlessness, heartlessness, listlessness of its milling crowds, a dull humdrum life dissociated from nature and its simple, spontaneous joys, a life that is dead silence or a shrill cry of agony, that is what a civilized city has to offer. Niranjan's poems on this subject are devoid of any sentimentalism or romantic nostalgia for nature or anything else; and that is what makes them intensely poignant.

In these poems also, as in all his poems, Niranjan is a conscious artist. His diction is chiselled, chaste and compact.

Priyakant Maniar (1927-1976)

Priyakant is a poet who has tried to keep pace with the new currents of form and styles of expression in Gujarati. He has written songs, lyrics, sonnets and free verse.

In the style of the symbolists, Priyakant also speaks of the facelessness, isolation and disintegration of man. He often uses bold and unconventional images, which though sometimes

11. हरिवर मुजने हरी गयो.

12. A fruit that makes immortal the one who eats it. Bhartrihari out of love gave it to his queen. The queen, out of the same love, gave it to her paramour, who, in his turn, gave it to a woman of easy virtue whom he aspired to win; and she, mad after Bhartrihari, gave it to him.

displeasing are telling. Priyakant has also written poems on some big American cities.

Lyricism, however, is Priyakant's *forte*. He has written some excellent lyrics, a perfect blending of the form and the content. He has sung with gusto and abandon the freshness of love, sometimes through the symbols of Radha and Krishna, dissociated from their divinity, in the context of human love. Priyakant excels in flashes of fancy, rhythm and spontaneity and richness of expression.

Balmukund Dave (1916)

Balmukund excels in portraying the freshness and outburst of passion of youthful love, in tunes and rhythms of folk-songs; and spiritual sentiments in the form of devotional songs. His *Hari-no Hamsalo* (the lovely swan¹³ of God), written in the style of a bhajan on the death of Gandhiji, is one of the best poems on the subject in Gujarati.

Balmukund's portrayal of nature in minute details as in

O! How even the ant
on a leaf robes herself
in resplendent beauty
(in this moonlight)!¹⁴

is delightful. His "vacating the Old House"¹⁵ is a gem of a sonnet; and his "Pilgrims on a Round Trip"¹⁶ a testament of love and reverence for life.

Venibhai Purohit (1917)

Venibhai also excels in bhajan-like poems, expressing Vedanta Philosophy in homely idiom and simple lucid style. Many of his love-songs, full of buoyancy and youthful pranks have suitably been set to dance and music. His gazals, exuding the spirit of gay abandon of the Urdu gazals, have won acclaim in many a *Mushaira*¹⁷. His poems for children are noted for their fancies, playfulness and music of words; and *Akha Bhagat-Dhappa*, a weekly feature in *Janmabhoomi*, a noted Bombay Daily periodical, are known for their humorous and satirical comments on contemporary events.

Venibhai has a luxuriance of language; and alliterations and rhymes come easily to him.

13. The Atma or the soul of man is traditionally referred to as a swan by Hindu saints and mystic poets.

14. परण परनी कीडीये शी घरे कमनीयता !

15. जूनुं घर खाली करतां.

16. परकम्मावासी

17. Gatherings where poets recite their poems before an audience.

Makarand Dave (1922)

Makarand is one of the foremost mystic poets of the post-Gandhian period. Profoundly influenced by the lyricism of Rabindranath Tagore, the mysticism of Shri Aurobindo, and the humanism of Mahatma Gandhi, Makarand has expressed some of the innermost mystical experiences in a language that goes straight to the heart. He has also rendered into excellent Gujarati verse some beautiful poems of some foreign mystics.

As Ushanas says, "*Mitai Giti* is the noblest specimen of Makarand's creative genius. Not only is it the best work in our language, next only to the *Yatra* of Sundaram that manifests the spiritual beauty of the human soul, it firmly establishes Makarand among all the Vaishnava poets of our language, whose longing for Krishna knows no rest!"¹⁸

18. *Jnana Gangotri Grantha Shreni*: Vol. 10, Gujarat Darshan (Sahitya-1) Page 64.

(III)

CONTEMPORARY TRENDS

The tendency to break away completely from the past grows stronger during the second decade of the post-Gandhian period, when the author's as well as the critic's outlook, profoundly influenced by the ideas of Futurism, undergoes a radical change. These authors demanded a total overhauling of the Gujarati language, usage of old words in new senses, emphasis on sound rather than the meaning of the words and a total break with all cultural traditions. These writers repudiated not only the Gandhian Era, but almost the entire past of the Gujarati literature.

It was under this impact that, to the writers of the post-1955 period, form was the be-all and end-all of all art, including literature. The artist creates the form for his own pleasure and for nothing else. Art is not a social medium. It does not even anticipate a reader or an audience. Since the artist does not create form for the pleasure of any one but himself, he cannot have any responsibility towards anyone other than himself. The only question an artist ought to be concerned with is: Am I true to my art? If the answer were in the affirmative and if he felt convinced that he was not influenced even remotely and indirectly by any extra-artistic considerations including the desire to give immediate pleasure to his readers, he need not bother about anything else—about obscurity, immorality, even obscenity.

This view of art and literature affected the external as well as the internal aspects of literature.

On the external side it was the metres that were subjected to the rigours of experimentation. The eternal quest of the poet is, perhaps, the word, the rhythmic word, so to speak. Philosophically speaking every moment is a moment of transition, a moment where the Past finds its consummation and the Future its roots. Yet there are particular periods in the life of a man or a nation, where an innocuous accident or the arrival or departure of a person results in the ultimate diversion of the course of history. Such periods we may specifically call periods of transition. At times like these, after a measure of anarchy for a while, the whole past is reviewed and re-assessed in the context of the present. So far as literature is concerned, the

words, the images, the rhythm inherited from the past often seem inadequate to express the experiences, emotions, thoughts and tensions the new age brings in its wake. The poet, therefore, has to evolve his own mode of expression.

This happened round about 1850, when the old metres, current in mediaeval Gujarati literature were found to be inadequate to serve as vehicles for the new stirrings in the poet's heart. Metres used in classical Sanskrit literature were then sought to be used again¹; and in spite of some serious misgivings on the part of Navalram Pandya, these metres gathered roots in the soil of Gujarat, with the result that the metres used in the mediaeval literature disappeared once and for all.

Again, in about 1895, Nanalal felt his genius to be handicapped by the restrictions imposed by these metres. He therefore, tried to evolve a rhythm of his own, the *Dolan-Shaili*; and made it the vehicle of some of the noblest and the best of his poetical utterances. This *Dolan-Shaili* did away completely with the number of syllables in a line, their respective places, the caesura and all other things, except the rhythm.

The poets of the Gandhian Era, once again, under the pressure of the needs of their days, when the whole nation was on the crest of an unprecedented upsurge, worked out permutations and combinations of various metres, rendered the caesura flexible, wrote run-on lines so as to synchronise the rhythm of the metre with the rhythm of the contents of the poem, and carried on bold experiments with old as well as new metres in order to evolve a sort of free verse worthy of an epic.

The post-1955 poet went a step further; and attempted to evolve "A-chhandas", freedom from the metre itself. Till then, the poets had attempted to tone down the rigidity of the discipline of the metres in order to evolve free verse; but though free, it was verse all the same; and verse the poet could not do without. A section of the post-1955 period poets, aimed at doing away completely with the element of metre.

On the external side, the modernity of the post-1955 period expressed itself in the lay-out of printing as well. The poet, perhaps, thinking that poetry now no longer remained an art of the ear tried to make the composition of types also add to the suggestivity of the poem. In order, for instance, to say that pearl-like tears trickle down the eyes of the blind time, the poet would get his lines printed as under:

1. Some Sanskrit metres were occasionally used by some mediaeval poets.

અંધ	સમયની	ઝાંઝોમાંથી
ટ		ટ
પ		પ
ટ		ટ
પ		પ
મોતી		ટપકે

The parallel vertical lines would suggest two drops of tears trickling down from each of the two eyes.

Statements into brackets and composition of letters in a circle, or in a square or in parallel vertical lines or even like a cross-word puzzle, is one of the queer forms modernity assumed for some time during the second decade of the post-Gandhian period.

The *avant-garde* of the period became increasingly subjective and obsessed with his own frustration and ennui. He no longer felt interested in the traditional forms of verse, the Sonnet, the Khandakavya, the Lyric and even the song. He had no stomach for epical compositions. Descriptive, narrative and reflective compositions of the traditional type had no appeal for him. The break with the past was complete and total.

The 'new' poet of the period announced with pride that he had nothing to say or to convey or even to suggest. He just created with words a form that was enjoyable for its own sake. He felt himself under no obligation of being intelligible. He sometimes revelled only in pure rhythm; or sometimes attempted to create impression only by means of the sound of words.

Modernity of the period expressed itself, as modernity always does, in new images, new symbols, and new figures of speech as well. The poet became increasingly subjective and obsessed with his own frustration and dissipation. He loved to talk endlessly about the ruins of his existence, about disintegration, darkness, violence, stones and boulders, blood-thirst, vacuum, death and destruction. He seemed to be bent upon indulging with vengeance in the depiction of the morbid, the ugly, the putrid, the repugnant.

To one poet of this group, the yellow sun appeared like an abscess full of pus; to another, the redness of the evening seemed like the blood vomited by a T.B. patient in the throes of death; to still another, the last ray of the setting sun appeared like the reproductive organ of the human male.

The junior contemporaries of Suresh Joshi led by Labhshankar Thaker, a poet of real talent, and his brother poets of the Rey Math, succeeded very soon in out-Heroding Herod; and their compositions provided a lavishly laid out banquet of

uncovered breasts and naked thighs, reproductive organs of human males and females, sterility and impotency, putrid carrions and worms and maggots. To them, *Samyoga Shringara* meant nothing more than sexual intercourse; and *Vipralambha Shringara*, an undying thirst for carnal pleasure. To a good many of them, the human being was but a collection of physical senses; and it was his passions, not emotions, that needed to be expressed. This affected poets not belonging to the Rey Math group as well. Nalin Raval has written about the lion's impatient forage for sweet sweet flesh at the fall of the evening; and Priyakant Maniar has, in one of his poems, described the preliminaries and in another one the sexual act itself. This pre-occupation with repudiating all that the Past stood for, had even made one of them say that it is the hands of Shri Krishna, and not those of Duhshasana² that required to be chopped off.

These poets, however, did try to convey something to their readers, howsoever shocking or repulsive it might be to those whose taste and judgement were formed by tradition and by a study of the classics of the East and the West. But, some others of the group—their immediate successors—strive to strip the word of all the shades of meaning invariably associated with it and lead it to, what they call, "non-sense."³ Some others of the group try to probe into the sub-conscious in a surrealist way. Here is a specimen, translated into English, of one such poem in prose by Shrikant Shah:

"Under the stroke of an axe of a yellow sky, murmuring trees fell down in the open mouth of a horse.

The lantern hanging on his dusty back turned into a delicate feather and flew near the eloquent bank of the lake.

And the idle bird that had stuck to the white tail, fluttered its wings and layed eggs⁴."

It must, however, be noted that not all poetry that is being written today bears the stamp of this modernity. A casual perusal of the poems published in the leading periodicals like

2. One of the Kauravas, who vehemently strove to undress Draupadi in the crowded court of Duryodhana, the Kaurava king. Krishna rushed to her help and performed the miracle of protecting her modesty by an endless supply of saris.
3. Chandrakant Topiwala. *Jnana-Gangotri Grantha Shrenti* Vol. 10 *Gujarat Darshan* (Sahitya-1) page 71.
4. અશ્વના સ્વલ્લા મોંમાં મર્મર કરતાં વૃક્ષો એક પીઢા આકાશની કુહાડીનો આઘાત સ્વીકારી તૂટી પડ્યાં. તેની રજોટાયેલી પીઠ પર લટકતું ફાનસ એક સુંવાળું પીછું બની તળાવના વાચાળ કિનારા પાસે ડહી નીકળ્યું અને સફેદ પુચ્છને ચોંટી બેઠેલા એવી પક્ષીએ પાંખો ફફડાવી ફેંડાં મૂક્યાં

Kumar, Sanskriti, Kavilok, Kavita, Samarpan, Navanit, etc. shows that the number of poems related in some way to the traditional concept of poetry is unusually larger than the number of poems of an exclusive modernist type which started some twenty years ago.

It should also be noted that the number of poets writing exclusively the modernist type of poetry is very very small compared with the number of poets who write the modernist as well as the non-modernist types of poetry and quite a good many of them have distinguished themselves as poets of the non-modernist type.

The poet's fascination for the ugly and the repugnant which lasted barely for a decade or so no longer obtains. It is being replaced either by a creation of fantastic or incongruous imagery by means of unnatural juxtapositions and combinations as in the surrealist poems like those of Sitanshu Yashashchandra, an outstanding poet, or, very much more largely, by songs and gazals that speak of the sea, the fish, the grass, the feathers, and the primitiveness; of the gold of the sun, the branches of sunlight, the moisture of chirrup, the cooing of fragrance and the fresh green dawn; of the scattering feathers, scattering darkness and scattering jungles; of listening by the eyes, seeing by the ears; or synaesthesia.

Besides some poems of Raoji Patel and Manilal Desai, two poets whose career was nipped in the bud by untimely death, it is the lyrical songs of poets like Ramesh Parekh, Anil Joshi, Harindra Dave, Yashvant Trivedi, Suresh Dalal, Madhav Ramanuj and Bhanuprasad Pandya, among others and gazals of poets like Adil Mansuri, Mariz, Gani, Befam, Harindra Dave, Manoj Khanderia, Chinu Modi, Manhar Modi and Bhagavati Kumar Sharma, among others, that find favour with the readers today. They combine many new and fine flashes of imagination with the best of the traditional traits. And the age of metrical poems and free verse, too, as evinced in the poems of Harindra Dave, Suresh Dalal, Jagdish Joshi, Raghuvir Chaudhari, Chandrakant Sheth, Hemant Desai, Rajendra Shukla, Dhuru Parikh and others is not quite over.

Thus, by about 1950, starts a reaction to the poetry of the Gandhian Era; and a zest for something new, something different and unique captivates the mind and heart of the Gujarati poet. One also hears loud echoes of contemporary western poetry and more than poetry itself, the echoes of contemporary Western philosophic thought and theories of literature and aesthetics. England no longer remaining for him the glass of fashion, it is the European authors to whom the Gujarati

poet turns for guidance and enlightenment. In addition to Eliot, the English poet and critic, the names of Rilke, Baudelaire, Valery, Sartre, or Mallarme or Kafka or Camus or Moravia or Susanne Langer or Wittgenstein seem to him the ultimate in literature and literary thought. Futurism, imagism, symbolism, existentialism, dadaism, surrealism, and absurdism, hold, for a time, their sway over the new writer of Gujarat; and the mind of the Gujarati writer is, in the ultimate analysis, liberated from its grooves.

PROSE

The post-Independence period, the post-1955 period in particular, sees much experimentation in the fields of the literary novel, the short story and the one-act play.

The literary novel, as distinguished from the commercial novel, which has its own recipe for being a financial success, also probes into the human mind at several levels of consciousness. A section of post-1955 Gujarati novelists has been strongly influenced by Suresh Joshi, who maintains that the element of incident in a novel should be brought down to a level at which it ceases to be an incident and becomes a symbol. To illustrate this theory, Suresh Joshi wrote *Chhinnapatra*, which he described as "a draft of a novel intended to be written". He has eliminated from it the element of incident altogether. The experiment did not meet with success.

Asti by Shrikant Shah and *Fero* by Radheshyam Sharma are novelettes belonging to this category.

Of the writers who do not subscribe fully to the concept of the new novel advocated by Suresh Joshi, mention must be made of Chandrakant Bakshi (1932), an existentialist, whose novel *Akar* is considered to be a landmark in the development of Gujarati novel.

Raghuvir Chaudhari (1938) is another novelist of note of this period. He has written several novels, *Purvarag*, *Amrita*, *Avaran*, *Ekalavya*, *Uparvas* etc. Mention must also be made of Madhu Rye's *Chahera*, Dhiruben Patel's *Vedavanat*, Mrinalini Desai's *Prithvino Pahelo Putra*, Kundanika Kapadia's *Parod Thatan Pahelan*, Harindra Dave's *Pal-nan Pratibimb*, and Pinakin Dave's *Vishvajit*. *Suki Dharati Suka Hoth* by Dilip Ranpura and *Avrita* by Jayant Gadit are also noteworthy.

In short stories also Suresh Joshi worked for the elimination of the element of incident. What remained, therefore, was the depiction of a particular mood, sometimes at several levels of consciousness. This the post-1955 writer does often with great dexterity as Suresh Joshi has done in some stories of his

Grihapravesha and *Na Tatra Suryo Bhuti*, and Madhu Rye has done in some of his stories of *Bansi Nam-ni Ek Chhokri*, in the harmonicas of his *Rupakatha* and in some of the Hariya series of *Kalasarpa*. The stories of *Pragaitisasik ane Shoka-Sabha* and *Sooryarohan* of Kishore Jadhav are notable experiments in surrealist compositions. Radheshyam Sharma also is noteworthy for some of the symbolist stories.

Of the writers who do not do away with the element of incidents or plot in their stories mention must be made of, among others. Chandrakant Bakshi, who enjoys being controversial; Saroj Pathak who depicts woman in her multiple moods and behaviour, Dhiruben Patel who probes into the mind of the addict and the abnormal with a rare insight; and Kundanika Kapadia who excels in description and delineation of sentiments.

In the field of drama, as noted earlier, the amateur stage in Gujarat subsists largely on translations and adaptations of plays from other languages. Madhu Rye is the only talented artist who has given two off-beat dramas: *Koi Ek Phul-nun Nam Bolo To* and *Kumar-nai Agasi*. *Tirad* by Shrikant Shah and *Ek Undar ne Jadunath*, an absurd play by Labhshankar Thakar and Subhash Shah are also noteworthy. The several dramas by Shivkumar Joshi are also a product of the post-1955 period. *Anderi Ganderi Tipri Ten*, a fantasy by Dhiruben Patel is also notable.

One-act play seems to be on its ebb-tide during this period. It is only the experiments in "absurd" one-act plays that partly make up for the paucity of one-act plays of literary excellence. *Make Believe*, a collection of five "absurd" one-act plays, published by Rey Math Prakashan, *Hath Pug Bandhayela Chhe*, a collection of "absurd" plays by Adil Mansuri, *Dailnan Pankhi*, in verse, by Chinu Modi and *Zervun* by Madhu Rye are some of the noteworthy one-act plays.

The essay, the personal essay in particular, is as weak a form as the drama and the one-act play. With the exception of Suresh Joshi, a master of Gujarati prose, some of whose essays are lovely little lyrics in prose, and of Digish Mehta, whose compositions are good specimens of personal essay, there have been not many noteworthy arrivals in the field during the post-1955 period. Gujarati prose, however, is well developed and the prose of Kudanika Kapadia, Mrinalini Desai, Vadilal Dagli and Bhagavat Bhatt is a delight to read. Rasik Jhaveri's travelogue *Algari Rakhadpatti* is a noteworthy specimen of Gujarati prose, and noteworthy also is the chaste reflective prose of Yashvant Shukla.

Fortunately, the field of literary criticism and scholarship is more fertile. Gujarat has, of course, still to produce a standard comprehensive book on literary criticism, dealing with the subject in all its aspects, written by a competent authority; a comprehensive grammar based exclusively on the actual usage, speech and idiom of the language; an excellent dictionary of old and modern Gujarati and a study of the typical forms of Gujarati literature. But much valuable work is being done in the modern period by Suresh Joshi, Niranjan Bhagat, C. N. Patel, Jayant Kothari, Ushanas, Jayant Pathak, Bholabhai Patel, Raghuvir Chaudhary, Hiraben Pathak, Pramodkumar Patel, Aniruddha Brahmabhatt and Ramanlal Joshi, among others. S. B. Bhatt's *Shakespeare* (1970), a critical study of the Bard during his Quarter centenary year is a work that would do credit to any language or literature. Madhusudan Bakshi's contribution to the discussion of philosophy of literature is noteworthy.

But few scholars of the stature of T. N. Dave, Prabhodh Pandit, Harivallabh Bhayani and Shantilal Acharya are seen in the field of linguistics and philology; of the stature of Keshavram Shastri and Hariprasad Shastri in the field of literary or historical research; and of the stature of H. D. Sankalia, A. V. Pandya, Madhusudan Dhakey and Harilal Godani in that of Archeology.

This brings to a close this brief survey of Gujarati literature.

Gujarat's written literature dates from the 12th Century, but it did not reach its peak of development until the late 19th and the early 20th Century. The great bulk of Gujarati literature is concerned with the basic problems of human existence, including man's relationship with God, with society and with himself.

The literature of the period before the second half of the 19th century, concerns itself predominantly with man's relationship with God; the literature of the period 1850-1950 concerns itself predominantly with man's relationship with society; and the literature of the post-independence period concerns itself mostly with man's relationship with himself or with the true nature of what we call "I".

Gujarati literature upto the end of the 16th century is mostly religious and instructive in nature. The 17th century witnesses the emergence of secular literature, which is marked by heavy moralizing and denunciation of moral corruption and evil social customs. The impact of the Western civilization aggravates the urge for social reform. It leads first to an idealistic view of life; and then, during the post-1920 (post-first-world war) period to realism and to social and political discontent.

It also leads writers to advocate the theory of Art for Art's sake, and some others to view art and literature as a means to

arousing socio-political awareness. The pre-1920 period is marked by translations mostly of Sanskrit books, and the post-1920 period, by translations mostly of English, Bengali and Marathi books.

With the achievement of political independence, the State having framed laws ensuring human dignity and social justice, the problem of securing the implementation of these laws became the responsibility of the politician and the social worker. And the writer, under the impact of the contemporary (post-Second-World War) European literature and under the feeling of the disillusionment resulting from the socio-economic and political conditions obtaining in the post-independence India, felt lonely, bored and overpowered by a sense of futility. He seems, however, to be getting out of it and on the way to a better tomorrow and to recovery of serenity.

ADDENDA I

INSTITUTIONS AND PERIODICALS

In the new age that dawned upon India with the arrival of the British, we came to realize the importance of working in a group for the common weal. Some institutions were, therefore, started in Gujarat. Their activities and publications contributed to the growth of literature in Gujarat.

Of such Institutions:

The Gujarat Vernacular Society, now known as Gujarat Vidya Sabha, was started in 1848 at Ahmedabad. This institution has been steadily doing its work in the field of learning and scholarship by publishing original books and translations consistent with its objectives.

The Society runs a department of research, the Bholabhai Jesingbhai Learning and Research Institute, which devotes itself exclusively to research in literature and Indology in general.

The Society maintains a rich library including files of defunct periodicals and rare manuscripts. It also publishes "Budhi prakasha" now a quarterly.

Forbes Gujarati Sabha was started in 1865 at Bombay. It has published several works of literary research, some of which are of high merit. The Sabha maintains a library which has, along with many old and rare books and files of some defunct periodicals, a number of manuscripts. The Sabha regularly arranges essay competitions on specific subjects stipulated in the endowments; and runs, since 1935, a quarterly, *Forbes Sabha Traimasik* devoted to research and criticism.

Gujarati Sahitya Parishad: The first session of the parishad was held in 1905 at Ahmedabad, with a view to spreading and popularizing Gujarati literature among the literati. In the course of the 28 sessions held during these 70 years, the Parishad has, in spite of its chequered career, rendered memorable service to Gujarati literature.

Some of the presidential addresses as well as papers read by many of the sectional presidents and other scholars, discuss among other things questions relating to grammar, orthography, philology, linguistics, prosody, the script, dialects and their variations, folk-lore and literary and cultural history. They also discuss in depth the essentials of literature and literary criticism.

In short, these papers form a sizable bulk of what Gujarat has to offer by way of critical thought and scholarship.

Gujarat Vidyapith, started by Mahatma Gandhi in 1922 at Ahmedabad, primarily as an educational institution, has a very rich library, including a copy-right section which contains all available publications in Gujarati. Vidyapith has published several books of high literary quality. It has given writers like Kaka Kalelkar, Kishorelal Masharuwala, Mahadev Desai, Narhari Parikh, Maganbhai Desai, Scholars like Pandit Sukhlalji, Muni Jin Vijayaji, Pandit Dharmanand Kosmabi, and Pandit Becharadas—critics like Ramnarayan Pathak, Rasiklal Chhotalal Parikh and Nagindas Parekh; and nursed the talent of poets like Sundaram, Umashankar Joshi, Krishnalal Shridharani, Karsandas Manek and Bhogilal Gandhi “Upavasi”. Its Jodani Kosha (Dictionary), in spite of some short comings, has brought order and uniformity in Gujarati orthography.

The Lalbhai Dalpatbhai Bharatiya Sanskriti Mandir, Ahmedabad, is looking after the research mainly of Jain literature which forms a considerable part of post Apabhramsha and early Gujarati literature.

The Oriental Institute and the Maharaja Sayajirao University at Vadodara have been publishing for many years books of socio-cultural, linguistic and literary interest from old and mediaeval literature. Their standard of editing and research is high. The Institute publishes “Svadyaya” a quarterly devoted to research and criticism.

The Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel University at Vallabh Vidyanagar (District Kaira) is bringing out *Jnana—Gangotri*, a series of 30 volumes in Gujarati. Of these 20, volumes are intended to serve as a book of knowledge, on subjects in humanities and social sciences and 10 volumes on subjects in physical sciences.

The *Gujarat*, the *South Gujarat* and the *Saurashtra* Universities also are publishing books of scholarly interest on academic subjects.

Many of the Thakkar Vassonji Madhavji Lectures delivered under the auspices of the *Bombay University* are also works of scholarship and critical acumen.

The *Sayaji Sahitya Mala*, Vadodara has, in the past, published readable monographs on the life and works of many important authors of the old and the mediaeval periods.

Gujarat Sahitya Sabha, Ahmedabad, besides having published some important books, has been bringing out, since 1929, annual reviews of books published during the year. Though the standard

of the reviews is not uniform (reviewing being done by different persons from time to time), they provide a fairly reliable chart of the state of affairs in Gujarati literature.

The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, particularly its Singhi Granthmala and the *Gujarat Research Society*, both at Bombay, and the Chunilal Gandhi Vidyabhavan at Surat are also making noteworthy contribution in the fields of research and scholarship.

The *Navajivan Prakashan Mandir*, Ahmedabad, with its numerous books written on various subjects from a healthy nationalist point of view and the *Dakshinamoorti Prakashan Mandir*, Bhavnagar, now closed, with its books on psychology and education, and books of literature for children and adolescents are also noteworthy.

The *Sastun Sahitya Vardhak Karyalaya*, started by Bhikshu Akhandanand, has been publishing inexpensive books and translation of books on religious, and moral subjects. It has also been running for the last 30 years *Akhand Anand*, a popular monthly.

Besides these institutions, periodicals edited by noted men of letters have also contributed much to the richness of Gujarati Literature. Many of the articles published in these periodicals are anthologized and published; yet there are a good many more published in the issues which, if not lost or destroyed, lie buried in the files at the libraries of the Gujarat Vidya Sabha, Gujarat Vidyapith, M. S. University, Forbes Gujarati Sabha or Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

Of these periodicals, *Gujarat Shala Patra* edited by Navalaram Pandya and subsequently by others, *Priyamvada* and later *Sudarshan* edited by Manilal Dvivedi, *Jnana Sudha* edited by Ramanbhai Nilkanth, *Sudarshan* and later *Vasant* edited by Anandshankar Dhruva, *Mahakal* published by the Shreyah Sadhak Adhikari Varg, *Chandra* edited by Harilal Dhruva, *Sahitya* by Matubhai Kantawala, *Samalochak* by Ramaniyaram Tripathi, *Vismi Sadi* by Haji Mohamed Alarakhiya Shivji, *Suvarna Mala* by Purushottam Vishram Mavji, *Rangabhoomi* by Nrisimha Vibhakar, *Puratattva* edited by Muni Jin Vijayji, *Yugadharama* by Indulal Kaniyalal Yajnik, *Prasthan* by Ramnaryan Pathak, *Dakshinamoorti* by Nanabhai Bhatt, *Shikshan Patrika* by Gijubhai and Taraben Kaumudi and later *Manasi* edited by Vijayrai Vaidya, *Shikshan Ane Sahitya* by Maganbhai Desai *Rekha* by Jayanti Dalal, *Dakshina* by Sundaram and *Manisha* and later *Kshitija* by Suresh Joshi have each in its own way, impressed their readers.

Of the periodicals now published, mention must be made of:

- (1) *Kumar*, a monthly periodical published, since 1923 and edited by Ravishankar Raval and Bachubhai Rawat has done the work of a University in enlarging the horizon of interest and forming and cultivating the taste and judgement of a whole generation of readers. *Kumar* has introduced many poets who subsequently blossomed into front rankers in Gujarati poetry.
- (2) *Sanskriti*, a monthly edited and published by Umashankar Joshi since 1947. Noted for its sobriety, maturity and catholicity, it belongs to the category of *Vasant*.
- (3) *Granth*, a monthly edited by Yashwant Doshi, from 1962 to 1976 and by Niranjan Bhagat from January 1977 is devoted to review and criticism of books. The reviews are frank and fearless; and the depth of the reviews varies with the equipment of the reviewers. The standard of some reviewers is very high.
- (4) *Kavilok*, a bi-monthly is published since 1956. It is devoted exclusively to poetry. It was edited by Rajendra Shah and Suresh Dalal for the first six years; and then by Rajendra Shah, Bachubhai Rawat, Niranjan Bhagat and Dhirubhai Parikh, till the end of 1976. Since January-February 1977 it is edited by Dhirubhai Parikh. The standard of poems and articles dealing with aspects of poetry and poets is very high; and some of its special numbers, like those on Rilke and Priyakant Maniar are thoughtfully conceived, carefully planned and elegantly produced.
- (5) *Kavita*, also a bi-monthly devoted exclusively to poetry is edited by Suresh Dalal. It is published since 1966. It publishes metrical compositions, songs, gazals, sonnets, *muktakas* and a—chhandas, as well as translations from other languages. It has brought to light some new poets. *Kavita* is well known among poets and lovers of poetry.

A similar periodical devoted to poetry, *Kavita*, a monthly, edited by Indulal Gandhi, Maganlal Lalbhai Desai—"Kolak" and Ratubhai Desai was published about late thirties.

Mention must also be made of some periodicals which were published only once a year. Of these, *Vina* and later *Sharad* edited by Yashwant Pandya, *Shriranga* edited by Dilip Kothari and some numbers of *Kesudan* published from Calcutta are particularly noteworthy. All these annuals, except *Kesudan*, are now defunct.

ADDENDA II

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN GUJARATI

The year 1826 witnesses the publication of some text books in Gujarati for children and 1831 sees the publication of the first part of *Bala Mitra*, possibly an adaptation based on a Marathi version of *The Children's Friend*, an English translation of a book in French by Monsieur BERQUIN, a French educationist.

Bapa-ni Pipar by Dalpatram, written in 1845, is, (apart from the innumerable doggerels, limericks and folk-tales that were handed down orally from generation to generation) perhaps the first original poem in Gujarati for children. Dalpatram wrote many more and found favour with the young and the old alike, by his brilliant wit, sparkling humour and simple, lucid style.

Books like *Shishu Sadbodha Mala* and *AEsop Neeti*, providing interesting fare in form of stories, were published by about 1875.

But the first book that was written exclusively for children and from the point of view of children themselves, was *Balak-no Anand*, by Ichchharam Desai. It was a translation of *Evenings At Home*, and was published in 1895.

With the arrival of Gandhiji in 1915, Gujarat pulsated with new life, and the whole concept of education at all levels was thoroughly revised and the dead weight of the Past was sought to be thrown off.

The child, then, came to be recognised for the first time as a distinct individual and ceased to be looked upon as a plaything for the elders. He had a personality of his own that had to be allowed the freedom to grow.

New ideas that sometimes seemed almost shocking and unconventional to the orthodox in those days, captured the imagination of the young idealist, and the Montessori System of education, adopted by the Dakshinamoorti of Bhavnagar, became the symbol of new education for children in Gujarat.

Gijubhai, Taraben Modak, Nanabhai Bhatt and Harbhai Trivedi—the architects of the vision that Dakshinamoorti symbolised—took it upon themselves, on the one hand to educate and to enlighten public opinion by explaining to the people what education ought really to be, and, on the other, to create a climate favourable for the unfettered and spontaneous expression of the child's inherent capabilities.

The first they attempted to do by means of their books and periodicals and by conducting training classes for nursery and primary teachers.

The second objective they tried to achieve by means of their own nurseries and primary classes run according to their concept of education and by writing and publishing literature for children themselves.

This they did with missionary zeal and the response they received in the initial stages was remarkable.

The child became one of the major objects of our attention. Daily and weekly periodicals started publishing regularly sections for children; and magazines meant exclusively for children started seeing the light of the day. Poems, stories and plays, humour and titbits, travel accounts, biographies and general information for different age-groups of children came to be written and published.

Much of this was, obviously, worthless. Anything that was childish or nonsense went by the name of children's literature. Fantastic fairy tales, tales of cunning and craftiness, horror and wonder formed a part of the fare that the child of Gujarat was served with.

On the other hand it was insisted in some quarters that children should be fed only on that literature which would enable them to face reality bravely and not encourage them to seek easy escapes from life. Imagination and fancy that played a very important part particularly in children's literature should be restricted, to the bounds of probability, and nothing that would come in the way of the child's development as a healthy, rational, normal human being should be given to him. Children's literature is not just literature for adults in a simplified form. It is qualitatively different. Literature for adults may have mere entertainment as its objective. Literature for children cannot have its aspect of entertainment dissociated from its aspect of education. Children's literature entertains to educate, i.e. to tone up the imagination, refine the emotion and sharpen the intellect of the child; and by doing so, teach him how to live like a Man. Literature for children cannot, of necessity, be anything but a combination of art and education. Entertain it must; but educate also it ought to.

The period between 1920 and 1940 can however, be said to be the best that children's literature in Gujarati has so far had. Because it was largely during this period that the concept of literature for children became clear and crystallised; and it came to be realised that children's literature is not literature written by children; nor is it literature written by adults in a childish way. Much that is valuable in children's literature in Gujarati was published during this period.

After about 1940 children's literature in Gujarati gradually ceased to be a mission and turned into a purely commercial venture. Children's weekly and monthly periodicals, too, concerned themselves solely with their sales; and the seriousness of purpose of the days of Gijubhai became a thing of the past.

The number of books and booklets for children in Gujarati is fairly high. Only during the quarter 1932 to 1957, over 2500 books were published and they are being published, almost at the same rate, even now.

Making allowance for all the rubbish and the trash that we have, we still find that children's literature in Gujarati aims at introducing in a simple, lucid and interesting style to Gujarati children all that is great and good, noble, sublime and beautiful in life and literature, history and civilization.

Classics have been abridged and told in a simple manner. The *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Bhagawata* have been retold in simple prose or verse. Tales from the Greek tragedies, Sanskrit dramas and poems, plays of Shakespeare, akhyanas of Premanand and narratives of Samal have been retold successfully. The *Panchatantra*, the *Hitopadesha*, the *Katha Sarit Sagara*, and the *Arabian Nights* have been retold in simple Gujarati. Folk-tales from Gujarat, Bengal, Punjab, Rajasthan, and some foreign countries and biographies of distinguished men and women, heroes, saints, rulers and religious leaders, social reformers and teachers, men of letters, artists and musicians, athletes and sportsmen, past and present, of Gujarat in particular and of India and the world in general constitute a substantial part of children's literature in Gujarati.

There are books describing scientific achievements and books disseminating information about birds, animals and insects, roots and herbs, trees, fruits and flowers. There are books on astronomy, the land and the sea. There are descriptions of big cities of the world, places of pilgrimage and places of historical and cultural interest. The Tarzan tales have been rendered into Gujarati and exciting stories of enterprises in the jungles and the sea are also a part of our literature for children.

Children's literature in Gujarati is also rich in stories, anecdotes and plays.

Apart from the weekly and monthly periodicals that are published exclusively for children, many Gujarati dailies and weeklies continue to have a regular section for children. The standard of production of all these publications is considerably high.

Children's literature in Gujarati has thus, on the whole, a rich variety to offer. Yet it has its own limitations as well.

There is not enough literature on all subjects for all age-groups and not a little of what goes by the name of literature is just trash and rubbish.

Writers and publishers of children's literature these days seem to be concerned more about their royalties and profits rather than about their responsibility and duty towards the child whose delicate mind stands exposed to their influences. To a good many of them, the playful jugglery of language that just coaxes and cajoles and numerous multi-coloured illustrations constitute the stuff that children's literature is made of. The matter they serve is largely shallow, half-baked and sometimes fantastic. Their insight into the working of the child's mind is poor and not many of the innumerable books that are published bear any stamp of talent and experience of an expert.

Poems for children were once expected to be nothing more than a rhythmic tinkle of sweet-sounding words. The element of poetry was, and still is, the last thing to be expected of a poem for children.

In spite, therefore, of many poets of note like Tribhuvan Vyas, Sundaram, Suresh Dalal and Venibhai Purohit attempting to write poems for children and writing with a fair measure of success, Gujarat has so far not produced a Tagore or a De La Mare, a real children's poet, whose melody and rhythm would captivate the mind and heart of children and whose poetry, the imagination of all who love the Muse.

Things do not seem to be so disappointing in other forms of literature, though the difference is not much remarkable qualitatively.

The publisher's attempt at giving only things that sell creates some serious problems. Worthless compositions by children and trivial activities of their momentary associations and societies are given publicity. One does not know whether this is done with a view to encouraging talent or with a view to earning cheap popularity by pampering and flattering the child. If it is the former, the purpose has obviously failed, because no new talent has so far arrived. If it is the latter, it is a positive disservice, because this premature recognition turns the otherwise normal and well-behaved child into a complacent and vain-glorious creature. Publicity-mongering becomes his main occupation which ultimately renders him completely insensitive to any real joy of creation or unadulterated enjoyment of literature.

It also creates confusion as regards the purpose of children's literature and leads some to believe that its main purpose is to

create authors of young children. Thus the real purpose is totally lost sight of and the activity does more harm than good.

I understand that more or less the same state of affairs obtains in many literatures of India. This should cause some real concern to those who have a vision of tomorrow, and its interest at heart.

ADDENDA III

[To be read after first para of chapter on "Contemporary Trends" on Page 224]

Suresh Joshi (1921) became the most outstanding leader of this group. Patil, Prahlad and Rajendra Shah, poets of the Gandhian Era, remained largely untouched by the socio-political ideology of the period and created, as best as they could, only forms of Beauty. Niranjan Bhagat, Hasmukh Pathak (1930)—the poet who said: "Gandhi never slept under so many flowers for so long a time"¹—Priyakant Maniar and Nalin Raval (1933) have more in common with their successors. Bakulesh, as early as 1944, talked about the elimination of incidents and plot in the short story². Umashankar Joshi, too, had said to the same effect in his article on the short story³. Yet, it was Suresh Joshi, who with the zeal of a missionary, worked, by his creative as well as critical writings, for a complete break with the Past. He influenced the thinking of almost a whole generation of Young Gujarati writers of the second decade of the post-Gandhian period. His *Pratyanca* (1961) a collection of poems⁴, and the poems of Gulam Mahmad Sheikh, later on collected in *Athava* (1974), sought to set a new standard for poetry. Suresh Joshi's *Grahapravesha* (1956) a collection of short stories, set a new standard for the short story. His *Vidula*, a long short story in *Biji Thodik* published in 1958, was sought to be a standard for novels and fiction. *Janantike* (1965) stood for the new essay and prose. But it is his criticism, rather than his creative works, that has had a powerful impact on the mind of the young literary Gujarat.

1. આટલાં ફૂલો નીચે ને
આટલો લાંબો સમય
ગાંધી કદી સૂતો ન'તો.

2. *Jnana-Gangotri Grantha Shreni* Vol. 10, Gujarat Darshan (Sahitya-1) Page 110.

3. *Ibidem* page 115.

4. The author cancelled his earlier, collection *Upajati* (1958) at the publication of this book.

APPENDIX 'A'

RASA OR RASO

The period from Hemachandra to Narasimha Mehta is distinguished by the development of the form of Rasa or Raso, written mainly by Jain monks. Certain didactic metrical forms in Apabhramsha were known as "Rasa". In Hemchandra's time the "Rasa" or "Rasaka" was a musical Roopaka (theatrical performance). Vagbhatta describes "Rasaka" as a soft and vigorous musical Roopaka with a variety of Tala (beat or measure) and Laya (rhythm). It was played by many female dancers. The number of pairs participating in the performance could be upto 64.

These Rasas were sung and played in Jain temples on certain special occasions. There were two types of Rasa: *Tala Rasa* (the Rasa in which time is beat by clasps of hand); and *Lakuta Rasa* (the Rasa in which time is beat with wooden sticks in the hands of the players). Rasa is, thus, a form of literature designed to be played by pairs of women singing and dancing gracefully in a circle.

Since Rasa was designed to be played by a number of pairs, it could not, by its very nature, afford to be lengthy. But with the passage of time the element of story entered it, and the Rasa became narrative and lengthy. This adversely affected the element of graceful movement associated with the form to such an extent that it is doubtful if the Rasas written in the 17th and the 18th centuries were ever actually played.

The Rasas were written in a variety of metres like Duha, Chaupai, or Deshi; and they were divided into parts called "Bhasha", "Thavani" or "Kadavaka".

The Rasa was originally designed to be a didactic composition. The early Rasas like the *Buddhi Rasa* are, therefore, sheer words of advice. But later on, the elements of description, narration, moral instruction and sectarian dogma, went on increasing, with the result that most of the Rasas composed during the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries suffer from heaviness and artificiality.

APPENDIX 'B'

PHAGU

Phagu is a poem portraying the beauty of nature in spring time.

It derives its name from Phalgu¹, the spring. Because the Phagu deals with the spring, it deals also with the pleasures and joys of youthful love, its hopes and fears, its pangs of separation and ecstasy of re-union. Phagus written by Jain sadhus who have renounced the world for good do not indulge in the luxury of singing the glory of the pleasures the world has to offer. They, therefore, in spite of their sometimes powerful depiction of the erotic sentiment, always end on a note of self-restraint, renunciation and calm.

APPENDIX 'C'

BARAMASI

Of all the forms of poetry in mediaeval literature, except perhaps the Mahakavya, Baramasi is the only form that has at least some roots in classical Sanskrit poetry.

The attempted Mahakavyas in Gujarati are not exact imitations of the Sanskrit model. They have the English Epic also as their prototype. And terms like akhyana, padyavarta and khandakavya, though Sanskrit, have no prototypes in Sanskrit literature. It is only the Baramasi that with its imagery, allusions and some stock expressions, can be traced to the cycle of season poems like *Ritusamhara* in Sanskrit.

Baramasi was in vogue in Gujarati till about the 18th century. In this form, the beauty of nature during each of the twelve months of the year and its effect on the heart of a lady separated from her lover are described. The separation, of course, ends at the advent of the Adhika Masa (the additional month) and the poem, in spite of the pathos, invariably ends on a happy note. The Baramasi is also known as "Mahina" (Months).

APPENDIX 'D'

PRABANDHA

Prabandha is a literary form peculiar to Gujarat and Malva. It literally means *Rachana*, a composition. It is a long historical or biographical poem of the type of akhyana. It has been handled mostly by Jain authors.

In works composed before the 15th century, the term *Prabandha* was generally applied to compositions based on historical incidents, with their prose part written in Sanskrit and

1. Some scholars derive it from Phaggu (फग्गु) a Deshya word meaning "a spring festival". The Sanskritized form of Phaggu (फग्गु) is Phalgu (फल्गु) from which are derived Phalguni (फाल्गुनी) and Phalguna (फाल्गुन).

the verse part in Apabhramsha. The *Prabandha-chintamani* (1305) of Merutungacharya and *chaturvimshati Prabandha* (1349) of Rajashekhara Suri are good examples of this type. The term *Rasa* was, at that time, applied to compositions narrating the greatness of some distinguished religious man or some distinguished holy place.

In the works composed after the 15th century, the terms *Rasa* and *Prabandha* are used as synonyms; and as is the case with works like *Vimala-Prabandha* of Lavanyasamaya and *Rupchand-Kunvar Rasa* of Nayasundar, authors themselves call their works *Prabandha* at one place and *Rasa* at the other. Poems based on legends and allegorical poems as well as works like *Kanhad De Prabandha* by non-Jain authors are also called *Prabandha*.

APPENDIX 'E'

BHAVAI

Bhavai is an old institution of folk drama, presented by troupes of players belonging to a particular caste. The players moved from village to village and made their living by providing to the people dramatic entertainment by representing scenes from life usually in a ridiculous manner.

In the words of Dahyabhai Derasari, as translated and quoted by K. M. Jhaveri².

"Each troupe had a hereditary right to play in a particular locality and beg of a particular caste. No stage was required for Bhavaïs. A street, a road, a Dharmashala³ or a temple was enough for the performance. A tattered piece of cloth or an old carpet served for a curtain. Those who had performed their parts disappeared behind it, new actors taking their place. They used to put on any sort of dresses and ornaments, big or small, what they could get. To look fair they applied chalk or yellow pigment (orpiment) to their faces. Torches furnished their light. Resin was set fire to and its flames furnished the miraculous element at the appearance of the actor. Coarse language and unseemly gestures were the main features of the play. Their special dance was like the dance of the Egyptians, full of obscene suggestions. They commenced their play with the presentation of Ganesha, the auspicious god, whose trunk was represented by a thick round bundle of clothes or paper, the sight of which excited laughter. Different scenes succeeded this scene in order.

2. *Further Milestones in Gujarati Literature*, Revised Second Edition, 1956, pp. 200-201 f.

3. Charitable quarters offering free temporary lodging accommodation to visitors to a village or town.

In every scene the principal character or hero came invariably accompanied by **रंगलो** (the clown or jester). It was his duty to make the audience laugh by coarse allusions, shameless jests and obscene gestures. There was no written book of these plays, and the actors prepared their parts by word of mouth : Very rarely some actor committed his part to paper in characters which he alone could decipher".

APPENDIX 'F'

AKHYANA

Akhyana forms a very valuable and vital part of Gujarati literature of the mediaeval period. Much of what is the highest and the best in creative literature of the period belongs to this *genre*.

With the spread of Bhakti-Dharma, the interest of the masses in religious and mythological stories was revived, and the institution of the *Man Bhatt* or *Gagariya Bhatt* began to thrive.

This Bhatt was, of course, a Brahmin, because Brahmins as a class were expected to satisfy the spiritual needs of people. But this *Man Bhatt* was a man of the masses.

He used to sit in the village square or some open place, late in the evening, with a big, round, narrow-necked pot of copper known as *Man* or *Gagar* before him. Beating time on it with the rings on his fingers, he used to recite in Gujarati stories from Puranas to the heterogeneous group of men and women gathered together to listen to him.

His success as a narrator depended on his personality, voice, art of keeping the audience composed largely of simple, unsophisticated persons of both sexes and all age groups spell-bound by flashes of wit, humour and satire, power to touch their emotions and ability to transport the audience to fairy lands by appealing to their imagination.

The plot of the akhyana was largely *Khyata*, that is, generally familiar to the audience. And the Man-Bhatt, the narrator, had to make it literally an art of the ear. The Man-Bhatt, generally began it by *Namaskriya* that is obeisance to Ganapati, the God who removes obstacles and brings success to an effort and to Sarasvati, the goddess of learning; and posting the audience with the necessary background, he started his narration. He divided it according to the appropriate parts of

4. Hence his identification as a Man Bhatt or Gagariya Bhatt, in contradistinction to Bhatt or Bhattaji, who read from Sanskrit and explained in Gujarati stories from Puranas to a small group of men and women gathered in a public temple or at the residence of some private gentleman.

the story or according to the depiction of sentiments within the bounds of propriety.

Each division of an akhyana is in a single metre; and is called "Kadavun". At the end of the "Kadavun", come two lines in a different metre, which are called "Valan", which give in a nutshell either the gist of the "Kadavun" and refresh the memory of the listener or a hint of what comes next. At the end of the akhyana comes the colophon, where the poet gives his name and sometimes a few autobiographical details, the date on which and the place at which the akhyana was composed and the poet's blessings to his patrons.

Depending on the complexity of plot, the art of story-telling, and the response of the audience, an akhyana, could at the pace of three or four hours a night, run into several days, sometimes into a month or even longer.

Though some of the narrators like Premanand recited their own akhyanas, it was not necessary for the Man-Bhatt himself to be an author. He could recite akhyanas composed by other poets. And there were poets like Nakar, who not being born Brahmins gave away their akhyanas to Brahmin Man-Bhatts for recitation in public.

The plot of the akhyana was just a prop. It was the blending of the various episodes in an artistic way and making it a thing of beauty that mattered. And a gifted Man-Bhatt who had mastered the art of story-telling, and who had his hand on the pulse of his listeners, could go beyond the written word and by means of humorous anecdotes and clever allusions to local or contemporary events and incidents, could keep up the suspense of the audience listening to a story whose end it already knows.

APPENDIX 'G'

PADA

Pada is a descriptive or narrative lyric inspired largely by emotion. It is meant to be sung, and the particular melody in which it is to be sung is sometimes indicated. There are generally eight to fourteen lines in a pada, though there are padas that are shorter or longer than this. The first couplet is usually called the *Dhruva-pada* or *Tek* (the refrain), which is repeated at the end of each succeeding couplet. The name of the poet generally occurs in the last couplet.

Pada is a very wide term. It sometimes includes even *garbo* and *garbi*, besides *thal* (banquet), *arati*, lullabies, *hori*, in fact any lyrical composition which is not very long.

APPENDIX 'H'

PADYAVARTA

Padyavarta is a form which developed along with akhyana in the mediaeval period. Padyavarta was a story told in verse. The author of padyavarta, too, had, like the author of the akhyana, to take recourse to direct narration. But while the akhyana dealt with plots and themes borrowed from Puranas and other religious works, padyavarta dealt with the plots and themes which were secular in nature and which had been handed down from generation to generation. They afforded the listener an insight into the working of human nature and the ways of the world; and sometimes even inspired one to acts of courage and heroism and to chaste and moral life.

In order to sustain the interest of the audience in his narration, the author of the padyavarta bases his story on legend, chivalric love and adventure and sometimes brings in even the supernatural. By means of miracles, Mantras⁵, black art, temporary migrations of soul to other physical bodies, previous births and rebirths, power to bring the dead to life, witches, gods and goddesses, demons and elements of the nether world, he creates an atmosphere that is weird and fantastic and gives sudden and unexpected turns to the plot of his story. The characters—women in particular—are clever, enterprising, resourceful and accomplished. And in order to inflate the story, so that its narration could be continued for a longer period of time, the author stuffs it with sub-plots, digressions, riddles, aphorisms, and wise and witty sayings.

Like the akhyana, the padyavarta was narration of a story in verse; and both were designed primarily to entertain an audience whose intellectual equipment and degree of emotional maturity did, to some extent, affect the craft of their poets.

But while the characters of the akhyana were largely gods and goddesses and demons, or men of super-human stature, the characters of the padyavarta were, in most cases, men and women of the world. The akhyana sought to serve the religious and spiritual needs of the audience: the padyavarta had no such aim in view. The poet of the akhyana touched as best as he could, the emotions and sentiments of his listeners: the author of the padyavarta, on the other hand, strove to arouse and satisfy the intellectual curiosity of his audience.

APPENDIX 'I'

GARBO

Garbo is traditionally associated with the bhakti of Mata

5. A mystical formula of invocation or incantation.

(Mother, the Primordial Shakti-Dynamic energy—from which everything springs). The first nine days of the bright half of the month of Ashvina, called *Navaratri*, are exclusively dedicated to the bhakti of Mata. On these days, late every evening, women play the garbo in most parts of Gujarat.

Garbo is a small earthen pot with holes all around and an earthen lamp with a wick inside. Since women carry a lighted garbo on their heads and moving rhythmically and gracefully in a circle, beating time with clasps of hands, sing the praise of Mata, the whole performance is known as *Garbo*.

The garbo was originally a simple dance in a circle, not involving elaborate foot work. With the rise of the tempo, rose the speed of the movement, till it was all vigorous movement with rhythmic clasps of hand and harmonious footwork.

Garbo was primarily meant to sing the praise of Mata and eulogize Her exploits. In garbo the bhakta extols the beauty, the clothes and ornaments, and the prowess and divine powers of the Goddess and prays for Her blessings. In some garbas, the bhakta refers to the social evils of the day; but there too, the garbo ends with a prayer to the Goddess to bring these evils to an end.

In course of time, the garbo developed into a gestic dance with elaborate footwork. Its function changed from religious to cultural. The earthen pot with holes all around no longer remained an invariable accompaniment. Folk-songs and modern lyrics replaced the poems singing the praises of Mata.

GARBI

Garbi is a particular type of lyric composed in the mediaeval period. Generally it delineates a single emotion or feeling. Being related to the form of lyric, it is short in length and cogent in its delineation. It is primarily meant to be sung in a group. It has, therefore, got to be musical.

The first line which is called *Dhruvapada* or *Tek*, the refrain, is a very important part of the garbi. The beauty and success of a garbi largely depends on this dhruvapada, which is repeated at the end of each stanza. Very often the dhruvapada is the essence of the poem: and the other lines of the poem are either an exposition or a substantiation of it.

GARBI AND GARBO

Both garbi and garbo are sung in a group. Though the terms are indifferently used, garbo is generally sung and played by women; while garbi is sung and played by men. Sometimes women perform the garbo, carrying a garbo on their heads; and

garbi, by moving in a circle, around a "Garbo" or "Dipamala" placed in the centre of the square.

Garbo is longer than garbi. The metrical tune of the garbo is different from that of the garbi.

Garbi delineates a single emotion or feeling; while garbo describes a person, an event or an object. Garbo, thus, being longer and descriptive, often lacks cogency and delicacy.

Most of the garbas of the mediaeval period are related to the devotion of Mata; while most of the garbis of the period are related to the love between Krishna and Radha or Gopis.

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<i>Page No.</i>	<i>Line No.</i>	<i>Incorrect</i>	<i>Correct</i>
59	1	is	has
64	9	garbas	garbis
76	36	Institute	Institution
82	8	disgusted	disgusted
83	13	testment	testament
85	2	provided	proved
102	32	weakness	weakens
122	28	importance	import
125	43	content	context
153	28	and an	and in Gujarati an
170	22	reader	reader after reader
173	8	pail	pale
173	31	All	All his
174	37	<i>Ekataro</i> , a	<i>Ekataro</i> is a
184	22	language	language appropriate

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